THE COMMUNIST

Vol. XII AUGUST, 1933 No. 8

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Why an Open Letter to Our Party Membership

Report for the Political Buro to the Extraordinary Party Conference, New York City, July 7, 1933.

By EARL BROWDER

Why are we holding an extraordinary Party conference at this time? And why are we proposing that this conference shall issue an open letter to the Party? It is not alone because of the extreme sharpening of the crisis and consequently of the class struggle and of the danger of imperialist war. Above all the reasons for these extraordinary measures lie in the fact that in spite of serious beginnings of revolutionary upsurge among the masses, our Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass Party.

This extraordinary conference and the open letter are designed to rouse all of the resources, all of the forces of the Party to change this situation, and to give us guarantees that the essential change in our work will be made.

The draft open letter, which is the central document in this conference, is the result of long discussions and examination of our work. It represents the most serious judgment of the situation and tasks of our Party by our leadership. It will undoubtedly be endorsed by the overwhelming majority of our membership.

BASIC TASKS OF THE 14TH PLENUM NOT CARRIED OUT

But we must recall that more than a year ago, at our Fourteenth Plenum already the Party had adopted all the essential features of the program of action here laid down. Yet, although we had some significant successes in our work since the Fourteenth Plenum —the Hunger March, the Detroit strikes, the Farmers' Conference, victories in the Scottsboro case, the veterans' movement, some important steps forward in applying the tactic of the united front and so on—yet the point upon which we must concentrate all of our attention is this: *that the basic tasks laid down at the Fourteenth Plenum have not been carried out.*

When we consider the especially favorable conditions for rousing and organizing a real mass movement around our Party, then it is clear that our small successes are important mainly to show the tremendous unused opportunities, to prove what could have been done everywhere and in the most important fields, if only we would seriously mobilize all our forces at the most decisive points.

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What were these most decisive points? They were: (1) to win a firmer basis for our Party and for the revolutionary trade unions among the decisive strata of the workers in the most important industrial centers; (2) the strengthening of the Red Trade Unions, especially the miners', steel, textile and marine unions, and the organizing of a broad revolutionary opposition in the reformist unions —above all among the miners and the railroad workers; (3) mobilization and organization of the unemployed millions together with the employed for their most urgent daily needs and for unemployment insurance as the central immediate struggle of the Party; (4) the transformation of the *Daily Worker* into a really *revolutionary mass paper*, into an agitator and organizer of the masses; (5) wide development of new leading cadres of workers—the establishment of really collectively-working leading bodies and the improvement of these leading bodies by the drawing in of capable new working class elements.

In the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Plenums of the Central Committee, we clarified certain fundamental questions upon which confusion had arisen. It is not necessary to revise any concrete decisions taken at the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Plenums. They were correct. But it must be recognized that these two last plenums of our Central Committee, in the face of continued failure to really concentrate the whole Party upon its basic task, did not arouse the whole Party to the seriousness of these tasks and did not let loose all the forces of the Party from below to secure the guarantee that the essential change would really be made.

To remedy these central weaknesses must be the central point of this conference, which must launch and carry through the profound, deep-going transformation.

CLASH FOR MARKETS LEADS TO WAR

Before passing on to detailed examination of some of these problems, a few words must be said about the international situation. It is quite clear from the events taking place that the tempo of the war development is speeding up very fast. The practical collapse of the London Economic Conference has revealed how irreconsilable are imperialist antagonisms, how sharply their interests are clashing. The British-American trade war which is raging throughout the world, and which has for a long time been conducted in South America in the form of armed warfare between the South American countries, has by no means been softened as a result of the developments of the London Conference. On the contrary, in spite of the attempts which are made in the public press to indicate that in London a certain amount of general agreement has been established

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between London and Washington on the currency question and on other questions before the London Conference, the fact remains that the central antagonism upon which the whole conference was wrecked was precisely the war between the dollar and the pound. The British-American antagonism is coming forward sharper than ever before in the international scene. The Japanese-American antagonism is also assuming a very sharp form. Perhaps some of you already noticed that this afternoon's *World-Telegram* carries a big broadside editorial by Roy Howard, calling for building up the Navy to full treaty strength as the "means of preserving peace in the Far East." These antagonisms among the great powers, and the measures being adopted for meeting the world problems of capitalism, make the development of the new world war a question of the day.

The danger of war is by no means expressed only in these sharpening main imperialist antagonisms. The sharper these antagonisms become, the stronger become the efforts of the leading capitalist statesmen to find a temporary solution in a common anti-Soviet war, to find a temporary solution of their antagonisms at the expense of the Workers' Republic. It is by no means an accident that precisely in the last days the relations on the eastern frontier of the Soviet Union have considerably sharpened. The attitude of the Manchurian "republic", puppet of Japan, has become extremely provocative. In Tokyo the newspapers are openly speaking about the necessity of annexing eastern Siberia. We can be sure that when Japan begins to take up seriously as a practical order of business the moving across Soviet borders, that they do so in certain agreement with at least some of the Western powers. We must not under any circumstances allow ourselves to become lax in our vigilance as to the necessity of rousing the masses for the defense of the Soviet Union merely on account of the diplomatic victories that are being won at this moment by the Soviet Union.

When we say this we do not by any means want to underestimate the importance of these diplomatic victories. The extension of the system of non-aggression pacts between the Soviet Union and France, and France's satellites in Eastern Europe, constitutes a definite victory for Soviet peace policy. The cancelation of the trade embargo of the British against the Soviets is another victory of Soviet diplomacy. The beginnings of organized large-scale trade relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and the perspective of a possible recognition of the Soviet Union by the United States in the near future are also victories. *But the winning of these victories does not soften the basic forces that are operating towards bringing together the imperialist powers for a desperate war of intervention against the Soviet Union.* It is neces-

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sary for us to weigh all of these factors in their proper perspective and to understand that the war danger is really an immediate question for the masses today, that we are really operating in a world situation more explosive, more pregnant with all of the factors of imperialist war of the most destructive character than July 1914.

ROOSEVELT "NEW DEAL" AND FASCISM

This world situation is the outgrowth of the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism. This is bringing profound changes into the world relationships and into the domestic policies of the American bourgeoisie. In the United States these changes are expressed in the development of the Roosevelt "new deal".

The "new deal" represents the rapid development of bourgeois policy under the blows of the crisis, the sharpening of the class struggle at home and the imminence of a new imperialist war. The "new deal" is a policy of slashing the living standards at home and fighting for markets abroad, for the simple purpose of maintaining the profits of finance capital. It is a policy of brutal oppression at home and of imperialist war abroad. It represents a further sharpening and deepening of the world crisis.

It has become very fashionable lately to speak about the "new deal" as American fascism. One of Mussolini's newspapers declares that Roosevelt is following the path marked out by Italian fascism.

Norman Thomas has contributed a profound thought to the question and has written several long articles in the capitalist press, to point out that the "new deal" is "economic fascism", and that it is composed of good and bad elements, many of them even "progressive" in their nature, if not accompanied by "political reaction". And a group of honest revolutionary workers in Brooklyn recently issued a leaflet in which they declared that Roosevelt and Hitler are the same thing. Such answers as these to the question of the essential character of the "new deal" will not help us much.

It is true that elements of fascism long existing in America are being greatly stimulated, and are coming to maturity more rapidly than ever before. But it would be well for us to recall the analysis of fascism made at the Eleventh and Twelfth Plenums of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, both for the purpose of understanding the situation in Germany and for accurately judging the developments in America.

First, it must be understood that fascism grows naturally out of bourgeois democracy under the conditions of capitalist decline. It is only another form of the same class rule, the dictatorship of finance capital. Only in this sense can one say that Roosevelt is the same as Hitler, in that both are executives of finance capital.

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The same thing, however, could be said of every other executive of every other capitalist state. To label everything capitalist as fascism results in destroying all distinction between the various forms of capitalist rule. If we should raise these distinctions to a level of difference in principle, between fascism on the one side and bourgeois democracy on the other, this would be following in the line of reformism, of social fascism. But on the other hand to ignore entirely these distinctions would be tactical stupidity, would be an example of "left" doctrinairism.

Second: the growth of fascist tendencies is a sign of the weakening of the rule of finance capital. It is a sign of the deepening of the crisis, a sign that finance capital can no longer rule in the old forms. It must turn to the more open and brutal and terroristic methods, not as the exception but as the rule, for the oppression of the population at home and preparation for war abroad. It is preventive counter-revolution, an attempt to head off the rise of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses.

Third: fascism is not a special economic system. Its economic measures go no further in the modification of the capitalist economic forms than all capitalist classes have always gone under the exceptional stresses of war and preparation for war. The reason for the existence of fascism is to protect the economic system of capitalism, private property in the means of production, the basis of the rule of finance capital.

Fourth: fascism comes to maturity with the direct help of the Socialist Parties, the parties of the Second International, who are those elements within the working class we describe as social-fascists because of the historic role which they play. Under the mask of opposition to fascism, they in reality pave the way for fascism to come to power. They disarm the workers by the theory of the lesser evil; they tell the workers they will be unable to seize and hold power; they create distrust in the revolutionary road by means of slanders against the Soviet Union; they throw illusions of democracy around the rising forces of fascism; they break up the international solidarity of the workers. They carry this out under the mask of "Socialism" and "Marxism." In America this role is played by the S.P., "left" reformists and the A.F. of L. bureaucracy.

The development of Roosevelt's program is a striking illustration of the fact that there is no Chinese wall between democracy and fascism. Roosevelt operates with all of the arts of "democratic" rule, with an emphasized liberal and social-demagogic cover, quite a contrast with Hoover who was outspokenly reactionary. Yet behind this smoke screen, Roosevelt is carrying out more thoroughly, more brutally than Hoover, the capitalist attack against the living

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standards of the masses and the sharpest national chauvinism in foreign relations.

Under the New Deal we have entered a period of the greatest contradictions between the words and deeds of the heads of government.

Hoover refused the bonus to the veterans and called out the troops against them, causing Hushka and Carlson to be killed. Roosevelt gave the veterans a camp and food, and instead of sending the troops he sent his wife to meet them. But where Hoover denied the bonus, Roosevelt also denied the bonus and added to it a cut of $500,000,000 in pensions and disability allowances.

Roosevelt's international phrases have only served to cover the launching of the sharpest trade war the world has seen, with the United States operating on the world market with a cheapened dollar, with inflation, that is carrying out large scale dumping.

Roosevelt's election campaign slogan of Unemployment Insurance and relief by the Federal Government has been followed in office by refusal of insurance and drastic cutting down of relief, the institution of forced labor camps, etc.

Under the slogan of higher wages for the workers he is carrying out the biggest slashing of wages that the country has ever seen. Under the slogan of "freedom to join any trade union he may choose," the worker is driven into company unions or into the discredited A.F. of L., being denied the right to strike; while the militant unions are being attacked with the aim to destroy them.

With the cry, "take the Government out of the hands of Wall Street", Roosevelt is carrying through the greatest drive for extending trustification and monopoly, exterminating independent producers and small capitalists, and establishing the power of finance capital more thoroughly than ever before. He has turned the public treasury into the pockets of the big capitalists. While Hoover gave $3,000,000,000 in a year, Roosevelt has given $5,000,000,000 three months.

As for the extra-legal developments of fascism, we should remember that it is precisely in the South which is the basis of power of the Democratic Party, that the Ku Klux Klan originated and is now being revived. It is the South that for generations has given the lie to all Democratic pretensions of liberalism by its brutal lynching, disfranchisement and Jim Crowing of the Negro masses, and upon this basis has reduced the standard of living of the white workers in the South far below that of the rest of the country.

Large sections of workers in the basic industries in America, living in the company towns which are owned body and soul by

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the great trusts, have for long been under conditions just as brutal and oppressive as under Hitler in Germany today.

It is clear that fascism already finds much of its work done in America and more of it is being done by Roosevelt.

But it would be incorrect to speak of the New Deal as developed fascism. With a further rise of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, the bourgeoisie will turn more and more to fascist methods. Whether a fascist regime will finally be established in America will depend entirely upon the effectiveness of the revolutionary mass struggle, whether the masses will be able to defeat the attacks upon their rights and their standards of living.

What are the main features of the "New Deal"? Let us consider it as a whole, as a system of measures, and bring together all the various features embodied in new legislation and actions in Washington. We can sum up the features of the "New Deal" under the following heads: 1) Trustification; 2) Inflation; 3) Direct subsidies to finance capital; 4) Taxation of the masses; 5) The economy program; 6) The farm program; 7) Military and naval preparations; 8) The movement toward militarization, direct and indirect, of labor.

MAIN FEATURES OF "NEW DEAL"

First, *trustification*: Under the mask of the "radical" slogan of "controlled production", the Industrial Recovery Act has merely speeeded up and centralized the process of trustification which has long been the dominant feature of American economy. There is now being carried out a clean-up of all the "little fellows". They are forced to come under the codes formulated by the trusts, which will have the force of law. The "little fellow's" doom is sealed and they are busy making the best terms possible for a "voluntary" assimilation before they are wiped out. Capitalist price-fixing has been given the force of law and the profits of the great trusts are guaranteed by the government. As for "controlled production," we have the word of an administration spokesman that "competition is not eliminated; it is only raised to a higher plane". That is quite true. The further strengthening of the power of monopoly capital is intensifying all of the chaos, antagonisms, disproportions, within American economy. "Controlled production" is impossible upon the basis of capitalist private property. There is only the growth of the power of the big capitalists and the intensification of all social and economic contradictions.

Second, *inflation*: The continuous cheapening of the dollar serves several purposes. First, it serves for a general cutting down of the living standards of the masses through higher domestic prices, and especially a reduction of workers' real wages (already

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over 20 per cent), and if we study the course of prices in the last few days, you will see that the reduction of real wages is now speeding up very fast. Second, inflation results in helping restore solvency to the banks and financial institutions by increasing the market value of their depreciated securities. Third, inflation carries out a partial expropriation of the savings and investments of the middle classes. Fourth, it results in the creation of a temporary expanding market to stimulate industrial production for a time, through the rush of speculators and profiteers to lay up stocks for higher prices. Fifth, inflation results in the launching of a tremendous commercial war of price-cutting and dumping on the world market. All of these results of inflation serve to strengthen finance capital, build up its profits at the cost of sharpened exploitation of the masses at home, and lead directly to imperialist war.

Third, the *direct subsidies*: This is only an enlargement of Hoover's policy of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Many billions of dollars as gifts, disguised as "loans," are being poured into the coffers of the big capitalists. It all comes out of the lowered living standards of the masses, the expropriation of the savings of the petty bourgeoisie, and out of mass taxation.

Fourth, the *taxation program*: There is being carried out under the "New Deal" an enormous shifting of even the present limited burdens of taxation on property and big income away from them and on to the shoulders of the masses, the workers and farmers. Almost all the increased taxation is in the form of sales taxes of all kinds, indirect taxation that falls upon the small consumers. All apparent measures of increasing income tax rates have merely fallen upon the middle class, while the big capitalists relieve themselves of all income taxes, as exemplified by the biggest capitalists of them all, Morgan, Otto Kahn, Mitchell, etc., who have gone for years now without paying any income tax.

Fifth, the *economy program*: While new taxes have been piled up and new billions of dollars given to the banks and trusts, "economy" is the rule for all government expenditure that reaches the masses or the little fellows. The government sets the example for the entire capitalist class with wholesale wage cuts, with rationalization, mass discharges, etc., of government employees. The war veterans have their disability allowances cut by half a billion dollars; unemployment relief is substituted by forced labor camps; social services of all kinds are heavily slashed or discontinued altogether. That is the economy program of the "New Deal."

Sixth, the *farm program*: While millions of workers are starving for lack of food, the Government turns its energies to cutting down farm production. Growing cotton is today being plowed under

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by direction of the Government. That is the New Deal. A 30 per cent tax is placed on bread in order that farmers shall get (at best) the same return for a smaller amount of wheat. Those farmers, in the best case, will still only maintain their bankrupt situation while the masses will have less bread at higher prices. The mortgage holders will absorb the great bulk of this government subsidy, at the expense of the stomachs of the masses. This year's wheat crop, already in the hands of the speculators, bought from the farmers at about 25 cents a bushel, sharply rises in price with enormous profits for the speculators. By the time the farmers can get 80 cents to $1 for the coming crop, the dollar will be so inflated that it will be worth just about that 25 cents they got for wheat last year. Farmers will be at an even greater disadvantage in buying industrial products at monopoly prices sharply rising under the Allotment Plan provided in the New Deal which is used as an attempt to divide workers from farmers and set them in sharp rivalry, but the masses including the farmers pay all the bills.

Seventh, the *military and naval preparations*: This is one of the chief features of the New Deal. The wild commercial war on the world markets, sharpened to an enormous degree by the falling value of the dollar, has already disrupted the London Economic Conference, has brought all imperialist antagonisms to a critical point. British-American relations are clashing in every field. Japanese-American relations are growing sharper. A government which carries out this bandit policy of inflation and dumping, while at the same time driving down the living standards of the masses at home, such a government really should logically go heavily armed. An inevitable part of the "New Deal" is therefore the tremendous building of new battleships, cruisers, new poison gasses, explosives, new tanks and other machinery of destruction for the army, new military roads, the increase of armed forces, increased salaries for the officers. Industrial recovery is thus to be hastened by working the war industries overtime. Such war preparations have never been seen before since 1917.

Eighth, and finally, there is the movement towards *militarization of labor*. This is the most direct and open part of the fascist features of the New Deal. The sharpest expression of this is the forced labor camps with the dollar-a-day wage. Already some 250,000 workers are in these camps. This forced labor has several distinct aims. First, it sets a standard of wages towards which the capitalists will try to drive the so-called free labor everywhere. It smashes the old traditional wage standards. Secondly, it breaks up the system of unemployed relief and establishes the principle that work must be done for all relief given. Thirdly, it furnishes cheap labor

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for government projects, mostly of a military nature, and for some favored capitalists. Fourthly, it takes the most virile and active unemployed workers out of the cities where, as government spokesmen have said, they constitute "a danger to law and order", and places these "dangerous" people under military control. Fifthly, it sets up a military reserve of human cannon-fodder already being trained for the coming war.

But the provisions of the Industrial Recovery Act regarding labor provide a much more large scale effort at militarization of labor, though in quite different form from the forced labor camps. In the industries, for the employed worker, the aim is to establish a semi-military regime, in many ways similar to the old war time legislation, under government fixed wages, compulsory arbitration of all disputes with the government as arbitrator, abolition of the right to strike and independent organization of workers. These things are to be achieved through the industrial codes worked out by employers and given the force of law by the signature of Roosevelt, supported when and where necessary by the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party, who have already entered wholeheartedly into this pretty scheme.

In the labor section of the New Deal are to be seen the clearest examples of the tendencies towards fascism. It is the American brother to Mussolini's "corporate state", with state-controlled labor unions closely tied up with and under the direction of the employers. Here we have also the sharpest American example of the role of the Socialist Party and the trade union bureaucracy, the role of social-fascism as the bearers among the masses of the program of fascism, who pave the way for the establishment of fascist control over the masses.

SITUATION IN OUR PARTY

Now let us consider what is the position of our Party for facing and solving all the enormous problems that arise out of this situation. What is the basic situation of the Party? During 1932 our membership was doubled. But in the first half year of 1933 it has remained stationary. We decided that recruiting should not be a special campaign, but should be an everyday activity. That was a very nice decision. But the way we carried it out was that we abolished the campaign feature of recruiting but we failed to replace it with serious day to day recruiting work; the result was that our Party has stopped growing. *This is a most serious and alarming fact.* It is clear that tens of thousands of workers are ready for membership but we do not bring them in. We do not consolidate those we bring in. The membership remains around 20,000 with average dues payments of 17,000 to 18,000 per week.

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We cannot claim any serious growth in membership and we will not be able to claim serious growth of membership under present conditions until we reach and surpass 50,000 members.

Secondly, our membership consists in its majority of unemployed workers, and the proportion of the unemployed constantly rises. What recruiting we do is mainly among the unemployed; partial figures available for some districts show that full 80 per cent of the new members have no connections with the shops, mills or mines. Of course we want all these new members from among the unemployed, and more of them—but if this is not accompanied by simultaneous recruiting of employed workers, then a most serious danger arises that we may become a Party of unemployed; that we may find the very composition of our Party becoming an obstacle to the basic task of building unity of employed and unemployed workers. It is clear that in this respect we are following, not our plan of work, but are drifting along the line of least resistance.

Thirdly, those new members we recruit are not, except to a small degree, brought from the most important strata of workers—from the basic industries, from mines, from among the steel workers, the railroad workers, etc. We have no serious planned recruiting work among these most important sections. Here again we drift and become the victims of spontaneity.

Fourthly, our shop work remains disgracefully weak. Only four per cent of our members are in shop nuclei; no serious improvement can yet be seen. Hundreds of nuclei have been organized only to disappear, and very few leading committees are enough interested to even be able to tell us how and why they were destroyed and how they could have been saved and built up. In the main these shop nuclei have died because of lack of leadership, lack of concrete help, from the Polburo, from the Central Committee, from the District Committees, from the Section Committees. We did not learn how to obtain the necessary activity in the shop—without which a nucleus exists only in form and will dry up and blow away—combined with the necessary safeguards against victimization, without which a nucleus is destroyed by our enemies. We did not seriously study the methods of combating spies, exposing and driving them out of the shops by the mass pressure of the workers. We did not take up seriously the problems of conspiratorial work in the shop, did not seriously understand that shop work is illegal work, and that here we must find the most skillful combination of legal and illegal work. There was laxness in the Central Committee and in the Polburo in systematically pushing these questions forward and finding the way to lead the whole Party to their solution. There was too much mechanical pressure from above for unprepared,

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unplanned activity; there was insufficient attention to concrete shop issues and the combination of these with the larger political questions. There were no steps taken to strengthen the weak inner political life of the shop nuclei.

Fifthly, all our lower units suffer from lack of concrete tasks and concrete, planned work, based upon an examination of the situation of each one. Abstract, general plans, worked out above, are mechanically applied to the life of each and every local organization. The result is lack of contact with real life, undirected general activities without results, therefore dampening the enthusiasm of the membership. This again results in surrendering to spontaneity, the line of least resistance; unplanned work, uncontrolled activity.

That, briefly is the situation of the Party.

WEAKNESSES OF REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONS

Let us look at the situation in the most important trade unions.

In *steel* we still have 40 to 50 shop groups, initiative groups, not mass organizations—about the same as one year ago. There is continued stagnation, lack of planned work, no leadership of struggles aside from some unemployed work, no increase but even a falling off of membership, still no sign of bringing forward new leading cadres; extreme weakness in drawing in new, native American forces and Negroes. The union still does not play any significant role in the life of steel workers. Most of the steel workers have not yet heard about the union. In heavy metal manufacturing, activities are equally weak, only some beginnings in small shops.

In *mining*: In spite of highly significant leadership in local strikes in about 40 mines in Western Pennsylvania since April 1st—some of them successful strikes,—the N.M.U. organization of mine locals still cannot count more than 30 to 40 units. Most of the membership is very loosely organized and lacks leadership; the membership has been practically stationary since the end of 1931. There is very little extension (even contraction) of the field of operation of the unions. There is no development of new cadres.

Let us examine the *railroad* industry; surely this is one of the most important central fields of work. Yet after years of resolutions and talk about the railroad industry this remains largely—well, we might call it "unexplored territory". What little is being done in the railroads is only by a small central nucleus, but the Party as a whole doesn't and the sections especially do not consider that they have any serious duties with regard to the railroad workers.

In the *textile* industry, the National Textile Workers Union is only now, after a long period of passivity, beginning to participate again to some extent in strikes. Its membership remains about

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1,000—about the same as in 1929. Some small successes only prove the tremendous opportunities which are being missed on account of lack of systematic planned work.

In the *marine* industry—the Marine Workers Industrial Union has conducted a number of small struggles on the ships, has begun concentration work on the Munson Line; has done some serious work among the unemployed; yet the Marine Workers Industrial Union also remains a small organization isolated from the larger masses. It remains especially weak in the work among longshoremen. The work inside the reformist organizations does not progress decisively. Entirely too little attention is given to winning Negro workers who constitute a great number in the industry. While there has been some development of new cadres, the Union is still characterized by organizational looseness and weakness of the leadership.

In the *automobile industry* we have the outstanding example of the great possibilities of big results with even a small measure of correct work. The Detroit strikes were led by our Union as a result of concentration and the beginnings of proper shop work, beginnings in raising suitable demands, flexibility in the handling of problems, development of responsible leadership, etc. At the same time, the Union shows an entirely unsatisfactory consolidation after the strike wave. These are due to mistakes and weaknesses in the strike itself, to failure to protect the democratic strike machinery from the company agents, retreating before the "red scare", and failure to recruit for and build the Party.

STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL INSURANCE—A CENTRAL TASK

Let us turn to an examination of our central struggle for social insurance, where we have most serious weaknesses. These weaknesses have been examined in detail in the article of Comrade Gussev published in the Communist International and in the *Daily Worker*. We must all agree with the fundamental correctness of that article. We must search for the causes and remove them.

While in theory we all agree that social insurance is the business of all workers, of all organizations, yet in practice we assign all concrete measures in the fight for unemployment insurance to the unemployed councils. In resolutions, we speak of unity of the employed and unemployed, but in practice our red unions often ignore the whole question of social insurance. They do not undertake any concrete actions which show they understand it is their very central task to fight for social insurance also. We have the beginnings of a good movement for social insurance in the A. F. of L. local unions, but it is left isolated, working by itself. The districts and sections neglect their task of building the whole broad movement.

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Above all we have a general underestimation of the historical aim of the fight for social insurance, even within our Party, and yet worse, among the leading cadres. We have not won mass support as it is quite possible to do because we have not been able simply and clearly to explain to the workers the need for struggle for social insurance. We will win the masses when every Party member and every Party leader can explain in the simplest terms that mass unemployment of millions of workers is a permanent feature of American society as long as capitalism lasts; and without unemployment insurance this condition results in degrading to a starvation level, not only the millions of unemployed but the millions who are in the shops. We must explain the difference between the real social insurance as proposed in the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill and the fake schemes of the reformists.

Probably it is no exaggeration to say that our explanation of social insurance has been so weak, that even you 300 or 350 comrades in this meeting today would not be able, if you were called upon suddenly, to give a serious and simple explanation of the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill. If you were asked the question "What is the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill; how does it differ from the fake unemployed insurance schemes?" would you be able after a half hour or an hour's talk, to win support for the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill? If you cannot do this you cannot fulfill one of our fundamental tasks. We not only have to know how to do this ourselves, we have to know how to train others how to do this also. But before we can train anybody else we must know how to do it ourselves.

WORKERS UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BILL AND BILLS OF OUR OPPONENTS

I will list ten points that distinguish the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill, points upon which we can win the masses to us, to work with us, fight with us, to support our struggle, to join our organizations. These ten points are:

First—Whereas the fake schemes of the employers, reformists and social-fascists, direct themselves only to *future* unemployment, the Workers' Bill provides for immediate insurance for those *now* unemployed.

Second—While the fake schemes all exclude some categories of workers, the Workers' Bill covers *all those who depend for a living upon wages.*

Third—While most of the fake schemes place burdens upon the employed workers, the Workers' Bill places the full burden of the insurance upon the *employers* and their *government.*

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Fourth—While all of the fake schemes contain provisions that could and would be used for strike breaking, wage cutting and victimization, the Workers' Bill protects the unemployed from being forced to work below union rates, at reduced wages, or far from home.

Fifth—While all fake schemes place the administration of the insurance in the hands of the employers and the bureaucratic apparatus controlled by them, the Workers' Bill provides for administration by representatives elected from the workers themselves.

Sixth—While all the fake schemes provide for benefits limited to a starvation level, a fixed minimum which is also the maximum, and this only for a few weeks in a year (thereby being in amount even below charity relief), the Workers' Bill provides for *full average wages* for the entire period of unemployment, determined according to industry, group and locality, thus maintaining the standards of life at its previous level.

Seventh—While the fake schemes establish a starvation maximum above which benefits cannot be given, the Workers' Bill establishes a living minimum, below which benefits shall not be allowed to fall, no matter what the previous conditions of the unemployed worker.

Eighth—While all the fake schemes refuse benefits to all workers who still have any personal property, forcing them to sell and consume the proceeds of home, furniture, automobiles, etc., before they can come under the insurance, the Workers' Insurance Bill establishes the benefits as a matter of right, without investigation of the workers' other small resources.

Ninth—While the fake schemes limit their benefits to only able-bodied unemployed, the Workers' Bill provides for every form of involuntary unemployment, whether from closing of industries, from sickness, accidents, old age, maternity, etc.; in other words the Workers' Bill is an example of true *social insurance.*

Tenth—Whereas the fake schemes all try to turn attention of the workers to the 48 different state governments in an effort to split up and discourage the movement, the Workers' Bill provides for federal insurance, one uniform national system, financed through national taxation and all proposals to the state legislatures contain the provision that the state bills are only temporary, pending the adoption of the Federal Bill demanded in the state proposals.

These ten points all protect the most vital interests of the entire working class. Each and every one of them is absolutely essential to protect the working class from the degrading effects of mass unemployment. All that is necessary to win millions of workers to

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active struggle for this social insurance is to make these proposals clear, show how the fake schemes violate these fundamental interests of the workers, and show how mass struggle can win real insurance.

With this Workers' Bill we can then proceed to smash the influence of the social-fascists and employers who claim that it is impossible to finance such a system of insurance. The Hoover and Roosevelt administrations have already shown that tens of billions of dollars are available to the government whenever it really decides to get the funds. But Hoover and Roosevelt got these billions only to give to the banks and trusts. We demand these billions together with the hundreds of millions used in war preparations to be used for social insurance.

We really must begin a mass campaign along these lines, conducted in the most simple form with a real concentration of attention by all of our organizations and all leading committees. Such a campaign will rouse a mighty mass movement for the Workers' Bill. And this movement will be under the leadership of the Communist Party. The fact that our mass struggle for social insurance has been so weak, politically and organizationally, is largely to be attributed to neglect arising from serious underestimation of this issue; and also to lack of detailed understanding of our own Workers' Bill, and the vital differences between it and the other bills.

OUR UNITED FRONT POLICY—A LEVER TO WINNING THE MASSES

In the last period of the struggle for a united front against the capitalist offensive, which began with the Comintern manifesto and the rise of fascism to power in Germany, our own Party has made some improvements in this field. The manifesto of our Central Committee in March was on the whole a correct and effective application of the united front to our conditions. We made some concrete extensions on these good beginnings. But can we say that we have decisively overcome our former weaknesses in our struggle against social-fascism? No, we cannot say it. These weaknesses still remain and some of them in even more serious form just now.

First is the lack of serious and sympathetic approach to the rank and file members of the reformist organizations. Literally hundreds of our lower organizations still take a certain pride in the fact that they have no contact whatever with the workers of the Socialist Party, A. F. of L. or the Musteites. They make no effort whatever to reach them. They organize meetings only for "our own" workers, those who already agree with us on everything. If they happen by accident to meet a Socialist Party or A. F. of L. member, these comrades assume a very high and scornful attitude.

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They appear very superior to these people. They are very free to speak of them as "social-fascists", applying the term to the workers and not the leaders. They think it is beneath their dignity to explain carefully, patiently and sympathetically how the Communist Party, or our various mass organizations, propose united struggles of all the workers for their most burning needs; to explain how the split among the masses arises because the social-fascist leaders sabotage and obstruct the struggle and thereby help the capitalist class. They do not see that it is absolutely necessary to convince each worker in the Socialist Party, Musteites or A. F. of L., through his own contact, that the Communists are the only sincere, active and efficient fighters for unity in the struggle for their own daily needs. Above all our comrades do not understand the need for sympathetic approach to these rank and file workers. Unless we really overcome this weakness in a more decisive manner we will not make the progress that is required for us towards winning the majority of the working class.

Second, we have a tendency to neglect or slur over differences in principle between the Communists and the social-fascist leaders. We can never win the workers to a united front of struggle, which means winning them away from the social-fascist influence, unless we meet squarely and explain sharply the basic differences between us and them.

Many comrades think that we will build up the anti-fascist front by keeping silent about the betrayal of the German Social Democracy and its open going over to Hitler. But an anti-fascist front which keeps silent about this basic fact is no anti-fascist front at all. It is already beginning to go on the same route as the social-democracy —surrender to fascism. An anti-fascist fighting front must be built—and can only be built—through exposure of, and fight against, those who helped Hitler to power, who voted for Hitler's policy in the Reichstag.

Third, there is a rising tendency, which we must very sharply fight against, to accept conferences, nice resolutions, new united front committees with all sorts of fancy names—as a solution of our problem. These things become not a means of reaching, organizing and activizing the masses but an excuse for stopping work. This tendency must be smashed. Words must be checked up against deeds. Action must be demanded and carried out. New masses must be reached. Everyone who hinders this, everyone who sabotages or neglects this must be exposed, no matter who it is, and fought against. Every committee which does not work must be resolutely liquidated as an obstructor of progress and discrediting the united front.

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For example, we have a committee which was set up to collect aid for the victims of fascism in Germany. This committee has been allowed to drift along and spend most of the little money that it has collected for the expenses of the collection. This situation is a scandal. We cannot tolerate such things. It makes the situation not one bit better, rather all the worse, that the Communists who should be the most active in the committee sometimes leave the responsibility on non-Party elements who for some reason or other are unable to function. Thus, on this anti-fascist committee we placed Muste as chairman, without any question as to whether he would or could give active leadership, but merely as a "united front" decoration. Such a united front is a miserable parody which discredits the idea of united front. It should be in the archives of the past history.

Every united front must be active, testing all its participants, including ourselves—above all ourselves. It must provide the masses with the opportunity of really forming their own judgment as to who is a really devoted, capable leader and fighter, who is a slacker, who is sabotaging and who has a tendency to surrender and collaborate with the enemies.

Such weaknesses as these that we have just briefly described will become all the more dangerous in the coming months if they are not quickly and energetically overcome. We are entering a period of large-scale united front efforts and actions, of which the August 26 conference in Cleveland is only a beginning, which must be given the most solid roots and foundations down below among the masses. If we do not have a correct approach to the masses, if we do not keep our attention upon the masses, if we surrender to this game of playing around with leaders, then we are not serious revolutionaries at all, then we are surrendering to social-fascism, then we deserve the contempt of every revolutionary worker.

DAILY WORKER CAN AND MUST BECOME REVOLUTIONARY MASS PAPER

When we consider the question of our *Daily Worker*, which is our most important single instrument for mobilizing and reaching the masses, it is clear that here also is a key point requiring the concentrated attention of the entire Party to improve it, in contents and in circulation, before we can really become a Bolshevik mass party. The contents of the *Daily Worker* in the last weeks already show beginnings of improvement. The *Daily* is a better paper as a result of the beginnings of some concentrated attention by the Political Buro. This improvement, through refreshing and reorganizing the editorial staff and its work, must be continued and extended. The Political Buro is determined to give from the best

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forces of the Party to make the *Daily Worker* a real mass paper. We have set up an editorial committee in charge of the *Daily Worker* composed of comrades Hathaway, Don and Minor, with Hathaway as the chief editor. This committee will work under the directions of the Political Buro which will make monthly examinations of its work.

This committee must further work in the closest contact with the Workers' Advisory Committee which is being set up on the basis of electing workers from the shops and mass organizations. In every district we want to see similar workers' committees set up for the *Daily Worker*, which will assume the duties of controlling and promoting the *Daily Worker*. The *Daily Worker* must be made the business of the entire Party, of every Party member and of every sympathizing worker. This applies equally to its editorial policy, its news, contents and its circulation.

It is a scandalous situation that in the ten years of the *Daily Worker's* existence and in the fourth year of the crisis, with seventeen million unemployed, with strikes and wage cuts, and struggles of all kinds going on everywhere, the masses beginning to surge upward, even the petty bourgeoisie coming into mass struggles—and the *Daily Worker* circulation does not grow, it goes backward. And nobody seems to get excited about it. *The question of* Daily Worker *circulation becomes one of life and death for our Party.*

NEED FOR A CORRECT POLICY OF CADRES

Another serious weakness in our work is the general lack of a well prepared and energetically executed policy of cadres—how to develop cadres, new leading forces, how to make use of them. This applies also to the question of the proper utilization of old cadres, the promotion of new forces and the establishment of collective leading bodies in such a way as to strengthen our connection with the masses, to consolidate our organization, give more guarantees for the execution of all our complicated and difficult tasks. We do not give the necessary attention to the developing of new forces among the Americans, and especially the young Americans and the Negro Americans. The distribution of old forces has usually been according to the needs of the moment, without plan. Many excellent comrades, good material for leadership, have been misused, shifted around so many times they don't know where they are at, and lose the capacity for serious planned work. And many old comrades also have simply been neglected and left to one side without the assigning of serious work. Comrades with long standing and training in the movement and great capacity of work, through the lack of systematic cadre policy, are left in passivity and their capacities wasted. We

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must really insist upon every leading committee in the Party and every fraction in the mass organizations discussing this question and beginning to build up a conscious policy of how to deal with leading forces, how to provide the conditions so that comrades can really go into their work and master it, how to help in the education of these cadres and especially how to develop new cadres and bring in fresh elements.

We must above all emphasize that there cannot be the old surrender to spontaneity. We must really plan this work and direct it to the most important points, *i.e.*, we must give our main attention to new cadres and the proper use of old cadres, especially in the mining industry, in metal, in railroad, and the heavy industries generally. And in these industries, to concentrate upon the biggest shops, the most important shops. There is where we must find our most important new cadres. If we do not find new cadres, we will not get new masses; and if we do not get new masses, we will not solve any of our problems.

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS—THE REVOLUTIONARY WAY OUT

In the election campaign last year our Party made its first big effort to place before the masses the struggle for the revolutionary way out of the crisis, and its connection with the fight for the immediate needs of the workers. Our election platform placed this question correctly. But we have not yet learned how to make this connection in life among the masses so that large numbers of workers will understand the revolutionary consequences of their immediate struggles and become convinced Bolsheviks through these struggles. This is a weakness which has been further emphasized by our tendency to neglect the agitation and propaganda for the revolutionary way out.

More energetic development of the struggle for immediate demands (shop struggles and strikes, fight for unemployment relief, against evictions, for social insurance, fight for civil rights, etc.) is the basic feature of all our tasks in the U.S.A. We must understand, and must bring this understanding to the masses, that under the conditions of the crisis, even the smallest of these struggles takes on a political character; places the workers before state power in the hands of finance capital; and raises the question of the struggle for power. This question, arising even spontaneously in the minds of backward workers, calls upon the Party to give the masses a more full understanding of the problems of the struggle for power, and of the program of the Party for the time when the workers hold power, the program of the revolutionary solution of the crisis and the building of a socialist society.

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There is no contradiction between the needs of the immediate struggle, and the propaganda of the revolutionary way out. On the contrary, the latter strengthens the former.

Of course, it is the tactics of the S.P. and the A. F. of L. to shout that they represent the immediate interests of the workers, and that the C.P. subordinates these immediate interests to a far-off revolutionary goal. But the social-fascists betray not only the revolution, but even the smallest wage-struggle. Immediate demands can be won, even under the worst conditions of crisis, but only through revolutionary struggle and with revolutionary leadership. The more clear the leadership and the masses on the revolutionary implications of the fight, the more chance of winning immediate demands.

Any failure to understand this leads towards submission to the social-fascists and agents of the employers. We had a clear illustration of this during the Detroit auto strikes. Due to our own lack of vigilance, agents of the bosses came into leadership of the strike committee in the Briggs Mack Avenue plant. After they had established their positions by using the prestige of the Auto Workers Union among the workers, they turned against the Union, claiming it was led by Communists and they didn't want the issue of communism to prejudice the winning of their strike for wage increases. Our comrades hesitated in front of this "red scare"; they tried to avoid the issue. By this weakness they actually failed to avoid the issue, but on the contrary made it effective against the Union, instead of making it favorable to the Union. The results of the strikes proved that it was precisely the anti-Communists who betrayed the strike for higher wages; the Mack Ave. plant, which broke away from the Union, lost the strike; those plants staying with the Union and Communist leadership won their strikes.

We should, can and must make this clear to the masses with detailed facts and not leave it to them to learn this lesson by their own bitter experience. We must face the issue of a red scare. We must explain, not in the language of high politics but in simple, clear language, what is our aim. We must not shout empty phrases about hanging the red flag over the white house or over the factories, but quietly in everyday language explain that while we put all energy into the winning of immediate struggles, we know that strikes must go on and be broadened and deepened until the workers put their own representatives into a position of power, to open factories and give everyone work, to open closed apartments, to open to the hungry and ragged the warehouses that are bursting with food and clothing. That can only be carried out by a workers' government which has driven the capitalists from their seats of power. To see and know these things in advance makes every worker a better

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fighter. The Party which sees these things in advance is the only party which is capable of leading the workers to successful fights for their immediate demands. The S.P. and A. F. of L. sell out, betray and sabotage the smallest struggles, precisely because they are against the revolutionary solution of the crisis; precisely because they want to restore capitalism, precisely because, in the last resort, they always take their orders from the capitalist government which they are opposed to replacing by a workers' government.

HOW TO FIGHT AGAINST THE N.I.R.A.

The fight against the Industrial Recovery Act—How shall we organize it? This is not a simple task. The illusions about the new deal as a road back to prosperity are still strong among broad masses. To expose and disperse these illusions will require more experience and above all requires the active, ceaseless, carefully thought-out intervention of the Communist Party. These illusions are based not only upon the "newness" of the Roosevelt regime, the demagogy of Roosevelt, but also upon two other important factors. These are, first: the appearance of "concrete results," as they say, in the increase of industrial production, and second: the active efforts of the A. F. of L. and the S. P. in support of the Roosevelt program.

Let us be very clear about the significance of the increase in industrial production. It has been a big increase in certain industries. It would be the greatest stupidity to deny this fact. It has been greatly exaggerated in the capitalist press, and we may point this out. What is really important, however, is that in most industries rationalization and speed-up have made such strides in the past year that even with increased production, the total number of workers employed is less than it was a year ago. A classical example of this was brought out in the auto workers' convention, with regard to the Ford plants, where production has increased 10 percent over last year, and the number of workers declined by 20 percent. This is a striking example of the truth, now generally admitted even by the capitalists, that even the return of full capacity of production in all industries would not put the unemployed back to work but would leave eight to ten million permanently unemployed. When the masses understand this fully, and realize that this will determine their conditions even if they are among the lucky ones who get jobs, then a large part of their illusions about the "New Deal" will be undermined.

Further, the increase in production does not represent an improvement in the consumption market. On the contrary, many of the most important indexes of consumption show a decline. Thus department store sales for June, one of the most important indications

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in the retail market, declined five percent from a year ago. But if consumption is not increasing (and it is not), then whence comes the demand that brought about increased production? Equally clearly, this production is for a speculative market caused by inflation. With the value of the dollar declining, that is, with increasing prices, all the speculators and profiteers are piling up goods in warehouses to speculate on the higher prices. Accumulated stores are increasing. In other words, overproduction, a greater amount of commodities than can be absorbed in the effective market, is more pronounced than ever. The stopping of inflation would immediately send the market crashing into a deeper crisis than ever before. That is why Roosevelt was ready to insult every imperialist nation and broke up the London Economic Conference rather than stabilize the dollar. But even continued inflation, continued indefinitely, cannot hold up this false market for more than a time. Sooner or later, probably sooner, the accumulated stores of materials will break down this speculative market. The indefinite storing of unlimited quantities of unused goods cannot continue. Even this limited revival of production, produced by inflation, cannot last very long. The end will be worse than the beginning.

EXPOSE CONCRETELY A.F. OF L. AND S.P. SUPPORT OF N.I.R.A.

The American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party are playing a very important part in building up and supporting the mass illusions about Roosevelt. The bourgeoisie is very anxious that the masses shall not resist their attacks. Workers and farmers, however, resist the attacks (this is already shown in the rising strike wave) thus making it difficult for Roosevelt to put across his program. The administration can be forced at least to make concessions to the mass resistance. Roosevelt's problem is how to keep the masses from struggle. His most valuable helpers in this task are the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party.

The A. F. of L. unconditionally accepts the Industrial Recovery Act and has pledged itself not to allow members to strike but to accept, without protest, whatever decisions are made by the employers and Roosevelt. These leaders cooperated with the bosses in working out the codes, as in the textile industry, with a wage scale lower than the present average, and 35 percent below four years ago. They make glowing promises to the masses of benefits under the Industrial Recovery Act if only they would join the American Federation of Labor. Great recruiting campaigns are being carried on; the workers are led to think that they are joining a "trade union" which will conduct "collective bargaining" for higher wages. They do not yet realize that the "wage codes" are not even an imitation of

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collective bargaining, not to speak of struggle and that these "trade unions" are not a means of action but a means whereby employers obtain guarantees against any action by the workers.

The Socialist Party has been very active in support of the "New Deal." Already in the first days of the Roosevelt regime, Norman Thomas and Morris Hillquit paid a formal visit to Roosevelt in the White House and afterwards issued a public statement to the newspapers praising Roosevelt and recommending his program to the workers. At the recent meeting of the Socialist Party National Executive Committee at Reading, Pa., it was decided to cast their lot without reservation with the American Federation of Labor in putting over the industrial slavery law. The "left" reformists, the Musteites, are wavering between the position of the Socialist Party and the class struggle, under pressure of their own radicalized followers. They are forced, to hold their following, to pay lip service to the united front, and even sometimes take practical steps for concrete struggles. Our task is to win these masses for clear and unhesitant policies. *The social-fascists are the shock troops of finance capital in pushing the New Deal into the camp of the workers.*

The first stage in arousing and organizing workers against the industrial slavery law is to thoroughly understand what it means in actual life and explain this to the broadest possible number of workers. Even this very necessary educational work, however, requires actions and maneuvers in order to make the issues clear and understandable to the broadest masses. That is why the Trade Union Unity League and the National Textile Workers Union sent a delegation to Washington to appear at the hearings on the Textile Code. This delegation spoke and made proposals in quite a different sense from that of the representative of the A. F. of L. and the Socialist Party. Comrade Croll, spokesman for the delegation, exposed the whole purpose and effect of the Recovery Act as an enslavement and impoverishment of the workers. She declared that the workers would not surrender the right to strike against any conditions unsatisfactory to them. Then she proposed amendments to the labor code, the complete rejection of which exposed the true nature of the Code to all workers who followed the proceedings. The rejected amendments called for the establishment of a guaranteed wage not below $720 per year based upon a guarantee of not less than 40 weeks work a year and not less than 30 or more than 40 hours work per week. The fact that the administration refused to consider any provision directed towards really raising the standards of living of the textile workers, or to give any guarantees about employment, exposes the whole purpose of the act as being merely a

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guarantee of bosses' profits and to stifle any resistance by workers. In addition to the wage provision, the Trade Union Unity League proposed other safeguards to the workers that were also rejected.

In line with this excellent example given by the Trade Union Unity League and the Textile Workers Industrial Union at the hearings, it is absolutely necessary that every revolutionary trade union and group shall develop, each in its own industry, similar actions, and to bring those actions to the largest possible number of workers. The presentation of our demands at the time of the formulation of the Industrial Recovery Code must be made an instrument of mass agitation and organization of the workers, the beginnings of organization of these workers for these demands and making these hearings one of the incidents in a battle for the organization of the workers for the direct struggle for these demands as presented for the Codes.

The role of the A. F. of L. in the textile hearings is very instructive for the entire movement. We must study and learn how to expose these tricks before the masses. It is not enough merely to state that the A. F. of L. is helping the government and employers. We must prove it, and this means we must learn concretely how to expose all their maneuvers. The A.F. of L. bureaucrats are not so stupid as to think they can get away with their treachery without masking it with all kinds of clever and flexible tricks. Thus in the textile hearings, William Green, who helped formulate the code, succeeded in getting himself into the newspapers as in opposition to the code, on the grounds that the wage-scale was not high enough, demanding $16 instead of $12. Then McMahon, President of the Textile Workers Union, also found it necessary to speak, but more modestly, demanding only $14.40. Then one of the commissioners, Mr. Allen, who evidently was inexperienced and hadn't learned to "play ball" with the leaders of the A.F. of L. and allow them their necessary freedom to appear as a loyal opposition, let the cat out of the bag by indignantly exclaiming that McMahon had worked with him in the preparation of the Code and expressed his agreement with every feature of it.

This revealing little incident is particularly valuable and should be carried to every worker in every industry. In the future we can expect that this will not be repeated. Undoubtedly Mr. Allen, and all the other commissioners, were called into a private conference and explained that they must not expose the collaboration of the A. F. of L. leaders behind the scenes, but give them liberty to make a fake opposition in the public hearings.

It is also necessary to learn concretely how to expose the maneuvers of the Socialist Party, typified by Norman Thomas. Mr.

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Thomas is one of Roosevelt's most valuable assistants in putting across the "new deal." Of course, this does not mean that Thomas comes out openly to endorse it. If he did, then he would be no more valuable than any of Roosevelt's direct secretaries. On the contrary, he says he is opposed to the underlying philosophy of this bill, but goes on to say that these politicians in Washington are so stupid, so poorly prepared to draw up a bill that would really execute the wishes of the big industrialists, that they left a lot of loopholes for the workers to change it into something entirely different from what the capitalists intended it to be. Mr. Thomas assures the workers that they can turn this law into something for their own advancement instead of the enrichment of the capitalists. These golden opportunities, Thomas assures the workers, much more than offset the bad effects which the bill is intended to have in driving down the standards of the workers, destroying the right to strike and herding them into company-controlled unions. This propaganda of Thomas and the Socialist Party is accompanied by declarations of 100 percent cooperation with the A.F. of L. which openly supports the bill in its entirety.

UNITED FRONT MOVEMENT AGAINST N.I.R.A.

It is highly important in the very first stages of the Industrial Recovery Act to secure the broadest possible crystalization of opposition against it and preparations for the development of mass struggles which are sure to come in the immediate future. On this vital issue affecting every phase of the workers' everyday life, we must crystalize a real united front of struggle. Here, if anywhere, are the need and opportunity for applying the united front.

From this point of view there has already been launched a serious move for united action. In the next days there will be distributed a public manifesto against the Industrial Recovery Act which will have signatures of 70 or 80 leaders of various economic organizations of the workers. The signers will include the T.U.U.L. and various unions affiliated with it; Muste and various unions associated with his particular tendency; National Unemployed Council, and unemployed leagues with a Musteite leadership; a series of A.F. of L. local unions, the A.F. of L. Committee for Unemployment Insurance and some unattached independent unions. The manifesto gives a politically satisfactory characterization of the new deal, exposes the falseness of the promises of returning prosperity and lays down a six-point workers' program against the Roosevelt program. It then proceeds to outline methods of struggle against the capitalist offensive. This program contains the following points which are the very center of every united front action today, and to the ex-

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tent that we can mobilize workers and workers' organizations around this, we can really build a united front:

1) Initiate and support all efforts of the workers to organize in shops, mines, stores and offices; strengthen the existing class unions to carry on the class struggle of the workers against the bosses and boss-controlled government agencies; immediate conferences of all genuinely militant elements in steel, in mining, textile and other industries to unite the masses for struggle.

2) Agitate and organize in all unions and other economic organizations for the adoption of a fighting policy in line with the program here set forth and against those who follow the dangerous and deceptive policy of "cooperating harmoniously" with the bosses.

3) Intensify the struggle against autocratic, corrupt and racketeering elements in the unions and against the A.F. of L. officialdom which supports or tolerates such evils.

4) Build up the mass organizations of unemployed workers, bring them into close cooperation with the employed; promote the unification of all mass organizations of the unemployed, locally, state-wide and nationally.

5) Organize and support strikes and demonstrations of employed and unemployed workers.

6) Organize a broad campaign for federal social insurance through conferences, meetings, collection of signatures, etc.

This United Front Manifesto concludes with a call to all workers' economic organizations to meet together in a general conference in Cleveland, August 26-27, to work out measures for organizing the broadest possible mass fight.

One of the important features of this Manifesto is the agreement to work for a unification of the unemployed, locally, state-wide and nationally. Serious progress is already registered in the unification of the unemployed. It is clear that in this broad movement, with strong representation of Musteites, the road to unity on the basis of class struggle will not be a simple and easy matter. It is easier to get agreement on a sound manifesto than to get bold and energetic action to carry it out. Only the most persistent and careful checking up on the actual performance of all those who claim to support the united front program, only the most fearless criticism of every failure to properly apply it, can provide a guarantee that the unity movement will consolidate the forces of the class struggle and not paralyze this struggle.

Our Party will be put to the test in this united front movement. If we are to succeed it will be necessary for us to make a basic improvement in all our methods of work and our approach to the masses. The nature of our criticism must be very clearly thought

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out, moderate and restrained in its tone and at the same time fearless in raising the necessary questions. We must learn to arouse mass criticism of every weakness and hesitation. Where arguments do not convince, mass pressure will often win.

The united front which does not reach down among the masses becomes an obstacle and not a help to the class struggle. Tendencies have shown themselves, however, to think that the united front is solved when some committee has been set up at the top. Comrades seem to think that the united front has been arranged in New York on top, in a private conference with Muste. Comrades seem to think it is not important to do work with the "despised Musteites" in the unemployed leagues. We see the Musteite League springing up, growing rapidly in some places; they involve perhaps one third of the counties in the state of Ohio. Especially do they penetrate the small industrial towns of Ohio. They include some of the basic strata of the American masses. Certainly it is highly important to give serious attention to this growing mass movement.

The experience in Columbus proved that the rank and file representatives are ready for our program if we approach them properly, and come to them in a serious, proletarian, convincing manner. It also proves that if we depend upon united front allies at the top to do our work for us the whole thing will go to pot. We have to do the job, and the only thing these arrangements at the top have any significance for, is merely to create the opportunity for the work down below, and if the work down below is not done, it is much better if the arrangements at the top had never taken place.

Even the best of our organizations furnish concrete examples of the most hidebound sectarianism and doctrinairism, of refusal to seriously take up broad mass work, the opportunities for which exist all around us begging to be used.

THE DANGER OF FARMER-LABORISM

It is necessary to point out that the Roosevelt "new deal" program represents not only the strengthening of the open fascist tendencies in America, but also that it is quite consciously and systematically supporting and developing social-fascist ideas, organizations and leaders. Roosevelt has a very special need for the social-fascists. As our Open Letter points out, the American bourgeoisie is trying to build bulwarks against the growth of the Communist influence among the masses. Nothing serves this purpose so well as social-fascist organizations. The Socialist Party, with its Continental Congress, which is being carried into every state, represents the most active link of this movement. This is the meaning of all the agitation and efforts toward the formation of a Labor Party or a Far-

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mer Labor Party, which would act as a syndicate or trust of all the social-fascist organizations and centralize their work.

In this connection it is necessary to point out that Muste and many of his collaborators who are now going with us, although sometimes hesitantly, in the preparations for the Cleveland congress against the Industrial Recovery Act, in spite of their leftward movement on immediate issues under the pressure of the masses, still keep the idea of the Labor Party as their central political concept. It is true that their public agitation and activities in this direction have been put in the background in recent months, but it cannot be said that they have abandoned the Labor Party idea. This still remains a vital link connecting them with the camp of social-fascism. This is the issue they have the possibility of raising at any moment it seems favorable to them, to demagogically break the united front and appeal to the masses in the name of the "higher unity" of a social-fascist Labor Party. We can guard against this serious danger only by the most persistent agitation and propaganda among the masses to expose the harmful character of all such movements or proposals. In this respect we must make more effective use of the example of the British Labor Party, which is the inspiration of all Labor Party ideas in America, and also the collapse of the German Social Democracy.

WHEN TO APPLY TACTIC OF WORKERS' TICKETS

In connection with this is also the problem of the coming elections. We have already some time ago given correct general directives on the carrying through of municipal elections which are going on throughout the country during this year. These correct directives have sometimes been a little distorted in practice. For example, the question of Workers' Tickets. At the Sixteenth Plenum we carefully limited the application of workers' tickets to certain types of towns and certain situations, especially in small industrial towns, the one-industry town, the company town. Some comrades immediately became so enthusiastic about the idea of workers' tickets that they wanted to apply it everywhere under all conditions and intended to use it as a substitute for the Communist Party. This was a spontaneous development toward the theory of the Labor Party. The workers' ticket is not a form of Labor Party. We must be very careful to closely examine every one of these applications of the idea of workers' tickets and make sure that the comrades are not using it as a way of stopping the fight against the Labor Party idea. We want no peace with the Labor Party idea. In the workers' tickets which under certain circumstances can be used in these small industrial towns, the Communist Party must play a very central role.

Let us concretize the conditions a little more under which the

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workers' ticket is a correct tactic. This concretization is more valuable in that it enables us to take up another question, that of how to break through the terror in company towns, how to legalize our work there, how to create the conditions for penetrating the big factories, and how to establish the leadership and influence of the workers among the petty bourgeois elements in these company towns. We have had some very valuable experiences in this direction in Dearborn, Michigan, the home of Henry Ford's central plants.

According to the comrades we now have three open headquarters of the Auto Workers Union in Dearborn and we are recruiting some few hundred Ford workers into the union. Our Party units are beginning to work openly in Dearborn as the recognized leader, together with the Auto Workers Union, of a broad mass movement that includes the local Socialist Party members, the tax payers' league, the homeowners' protective associations, some Democratic clubs, all sorts of language organizations, some of them belonging to open fascist organizations nationally—a broad united mass movement of the most variegated sort. This United Front, fighting on immediate issues, itself raised the question of putting a ticket in the coming elections. I think that our comrades in Detroit were correct when they decided not to insist upon making a strictly Party election campaign there, but developing very carefully the open participation of the Communist Party, assuring a working class character of the ticket, to very boldly go into the movement stating, "the Communists are with you, our Party will participate in this broad mass movement." Thus the workers will be consciously collaborating with the Communist Party. Under such circumstances as these we can agree to a workers' ticket and especially when such a workers' ticket arises out of the development of a real mass struggle in which we are breaking the conditions of illegality, in which we are establishing our rights, in which we are penetrating the factories, in which we are building a united front around the unions.

Under conditions like this, workers' tickets are correct and will help to consolidate and raise the political level of this movement. This is an example of the approach in getting into the company towns—the small town dominated by the big trusts. This has always been one of our weakest points in building up our movement.

Perhaps this is as good occasion as any to say just a passing word about the renegades, the Lovestoneites and the Trotzkyites. For several years one of their close connecting links was the Labor Party. Now the Lovestoneites have become the advocates of the Labor Party whereas the Trotzkyites now speak against the Labor Party. All of this is, of course, mere by-play, division of labor.

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The political degeneracy of all these renegades has been very sharply expressed in connection with the German situation. In connection with Germany these renegade groups proved their value to the bourgeoisie, proved their value as one of the recognized, most important auxiliaries of the social-fascists. This is necessary to mention because there appears sometimes in our ranks a certain attitude of toleration towards these renegades. Last fall we made a very sharp criticism of a few comrades who in the election campaign wanted to answer the provocations of the renegades in their own terms, to chase them away. We said this is no way to handle any real workers who are misled, it is too mechanical, it creates sympathy for them among the masses. We must handle them politically. There is sometimes a tendency not only to stop the wrong forms of attack but to let down on the political attack against the renegades—forming sort of a quiet truce with the renegades. But we can have no truce with the renegades. Our struggle against them has not finished and it will not be finished until they have been completely wiped out. At the present time they are not very strong and influential. But when a group of our membership shows a tolerant attitude towards their ideas and towards their leaders, we must have the most intolerant kind of struggle against it. We must create such an atmosphere that any worker who has in the past had any kind of connection with these leaders will begin to understand that he has been fraternizing with the enemy, that if he has shaken hands with these leaders he will begin to feel ashamed and go wash his hands, that he will get an attitude of contempt and hatred against these counter-revolutionaries, who had nothing to do in the German situation except stab in the back our heroic German Party and slander its imprisoned leaders.

ROOTING PARTY IN BASIC INDUSTRIES

It is clear that the working class in America, and the Communist Party, are entering into a period of decisive events which will determine for many years to come the whole history of our movement. Whether the toiling masses of America will go upon the path of determined class struggle, whether they will take the road toward the revolutionary way out of the crisis of capitalism, or whether they will be turned into the channels of social-fascism or fascism—this question will be decided by the work of the Communist Party. If our Party can gather all its forces for a profound change in its work and really make a Bolshevik turn to the masses, can assume the full responsibilities of leadership of the growing strike movement, the struggle of the unemployed; really build a solid base for itself among the most decisive strata of the working class, the workers in basic industry; if our Party can

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really gather around it the non-proletarian masses who are suffering under the crisis—only then will the Communist Party of the United States really have measured up to its historic responsibility. Only then will we really have shown that we understand the basic teachings of Lenin.

When we search for the reasons of our previous failures to make this decisive change, we must emphasize one key question which explains most of our failures. The Open Letter states this very sharply. It clearly establishes that among all our weaknesses, *the central point is the failure to understand the decisive role played by the workers in basic industries*, in the most decisive industrial centers, in the most important big shops and mines. Without securing a solid foundation among these most decisive workers, all successes in other gelds of work, no matter how important they may be, are built upon sand without any guarantee of permanence.

Because of our weak understanding of this central question, the Party and its leadership, first of all the Central Committee and Polburo, has not been able to drive forward along a firm course determined according to plan. It has as yet been unable to make use of the most favorable possibilities for moving forward steadily from point to point, consolidating the growing forces of a rising mass movement. We have surrendered our planned work to the pressure of incidental problems of everyday life. We have become captives of spontaneity instead of masters of the development of events. We have surrendered to our weaknesses instead of overcoming them. Because the main body of our membership are unemployed, we allowed the growth of our Party to accentuate this one-sidedness, instead of decisively driving toward the recruitment of employed workers. Because our members are mainly in small shops, we have surrendered to the difficulties of penetrating the big factories. Because it is easier to win small temporary victories in light industry, we have allowed ourselves to be driven back in coal, steel, railroad, etc. The practical work has been determined not by our plan, but by the pressure of the events of the day.

When we give this most sharp emphasis upon the central importance of winning a solid foundation among the workers in the basic industries, we must warn against the interpretation that this means we are doing too much among the unemployed workers. Such an interpretation would be a serious distortion of the Open Letter. We do not have too many unemployed, we only have too few employed. It is not that our Unemployed Councils are too strong. On the contrary, they are seriously weak. It is only that our revolutionary trade union movement and the leadership of strike struggles in the basic industries are still stagnant.

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The decisive strengthening of our base and our activities among the employed workers in basic industry will not weaken our unemployed movement. On the contrary, it will give it an enormous impetus forward. At the same time our Unemployed Councils will grow in membership and power, if they are also orientated mainly upon the workers who have been thrown out of the most important factories and industries, thereby able to contribute to the growth of the revolutionary trade unions in these industries.

Similarly, our emphasis upon winning the decisive proletarian masses must not be interpreted as in any way turning away from the task of winning allies among the non-proletarian masses. One of the important results that will follow from a decisive widening of our proletarian base will lie precisely in the strengthened abilities of the Party to lead the struggles of the farmers, of the Negro masses, the veterans, the students, etc.; to really bring them into the revolutionary struggle against the rule of finance capital. It is not a weakness of our Party that it has played an important role in the rising mass struggles of the American farmers. But our leadership of these militant farmers has suffered from the obscuring of the role of the Party and the Party's distinctive program. This leadership will always be under the danger of being broken by some clever demagogue until and unless our Party finds its proper foundation in strong organizational roots among the basic proletariat and until it works among the farmers as a strong, flexible, proletarian mass Party. Especially we must emphasize the importance of the agricultural workers, the part of the working class who are at the same time engaged directly in agriculture with the farmers, in close contact with the farming masses. Agricultural workers, many millions of them in the United States, beginning to ripen for organization, will give us a proletarian base among the farmers, the binding link between the workers and farming masses.

With regard to the work among the women, we have very important experiences in this field which should be fully brought out, especially in the reports from the districts. I have in mind especially the strikes of the Negro women, the nut pickers in St. Louis and the needle workers on the South Side in Chicago. These are really historical strikes. The strikers were mostly young Negro women who were striking for the first time; they carried through struggles, established their own leadership, won battles and built up unions—these are things which certainly should fill us all with enthusiasm and confidence for a real tremendous mass movement in this country. When we see young Negro women doing these things while we are sitting around complaining that we were not able to do them, among miners, steel workers, etc., we must blush for

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shame. In this connection it is very interesting to note that these Negro women are doing good political educational work. In St. Louis they have just sent in an order for 500 copies of every issue of the *Working Woman*. They are carrying on a systematic campaign of education, distributing literature, holding discussions, etc.

ORGANIZING BROAD NEGRO LIBERATION MOVEMENT

With regard to Negro work I will only make a very brief observation. The latest victories of the Scottsboro case have carried the influence of our program for the liberation of Negro masses far and wide and have created for us tremendous opportunities. We must say, however, that we are handling these opportunities clumsily, hesitatingly, not exactly knowing how to go about it, how to crystalize organizationally this movement of struggle around the Scottsboro case. Sometimes it seems we are afraid to admit that victories have really been won by our activities, there is sometimes the impression that these victories are merely diabolical maneuvers of a super-clever enemy who is outwitting us by making concessions to us. This kind of nonsense must be ended. Most important of all we have failed to find organizational instruments capable of embracing this broad mass movement of Negroes. Of course, it is necessary to give first attention to drawing Negro proletarians into the revolutionary trade union movement. The two strikes I spoke about are of significant importance in this respect. The fact that the same thing does not take place in other industries is not satisfactory however. Both of these successful strikes take on similar importance because they both resulted in building the trade unions and in creating leading cadres from the strikers. We must also emphasize the drawing of Negro unemployed into the Unemployed Councils, into leading positions and the progress that has been registered by this. We must recruit the best fighters among the Negro masses into the Party, training cadres for future important work. It is possible and necessary to build a bigger Negro membership in the I.L.D. and other organizations. When all these things are said and done the question still remains unanswered, what are we going to do about these broad masses of Negroes who have been awakened by our struggles in their behalf and by our activities, but who cannot as yet be drawn into the Party, Unemployed Councils or I.L.D.? Every day this question is pressing upon us more sharply. Over two years ago we tried to find an answer in the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. Is it not possible that the time has now ripened, that the L.S.N.R. can be successfully brought forward as the answer to the problem of organizing the broad Negro liberation movement?

SHIFT CENTER OF GRAVITY TO LOWER ORGANIZATIONS

In order to carry out the profound change in our work called for in the Open Letter, it is necessary to make profound adjust-

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ments in the inner life of the Party. It is necessary to shift the center of gravity of Party life to the concentration points down below. This also means that the Section Committees of the Party must play a much more responsible role than they have ever done before.

The very heart of all the work which we are speaking about lies in the Party section and its leadership. It lies in the building of capable, energetic, responsible Section Committees. It is one of the most basic tasks of our Party. The sections must be developed to the point where they have more initiative and more sense of responsibility and power. Where sections are now assigned big territories which they cannot effectively cover, they must be broken up into a number of sections of workable size. The Section Committee must have much more material resources with which to work. This must begin with a basic redistribution of Party finances. The present distribution of dues income where half the Party funds come to the national office must be radically revised. This system had justification in the past when only the existence of a relatively strong central apparatus guaranteed the correct political line of the Party. Today the point of emphasis must be changed. Only the building of strong section committees of our Party can give the guarantee for our growth and the firmness of our political line. The strengthened Party sections can in their turn concentrate upon the most important factories in their territory and give serious leadership to all mass activities.

In connection with the shifting of emphasis to the lower organizations it will be necessary to carry out a serious review of the apparatus of paid functionaries throughout the Party and mass organizations. It is clearly necessary to move decisively towards reducing the proportion of paid workers in the apparatus in relation to the size of membership which is served by it. Especially in all the national offices it is necessary to reduce the paid apparatus to a minimum. Many times in the past we have moved in this direction. After a few months, however, old habits get back and the apparatus grows again. It will be necessary now to take measures that will really make these changes permanent.

REORGANIZATION OF OUR FINANCES

The whole system of finances of our movement requires a thorough re-examination and re-adjustment. It is necessary to have from top to bottom an improvement of our financial system carried through by every responsible committee, applying the following principles:

1) The sources of financial support must be broadened out, must be placed upon a mass basis. Every organization must, in the

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first place, rely for its finances upon continuous and growing mass contacts and mass support.

2) There must be established with the utmost firmness, a strict system of accounting for all finances and the establishment of guarantees that they are expended for the purpose for which they were intended. Auditing and reports to the membership must be made.

3) The personnel handling finances must be carefully selected from among the most trusted comrades and the financial apparatus should be small with the strict fixing of personal responsibility. This is especially important in the mass organizations where organizational looseness often results in unreliable elements drifting into positions of financial responsibility, and by their misuse of these positions discrediting the movement.

4) Methods of making money collections in mass meetings must be seriously revised. The existing tendency to make long general collection speeches as the main feature of the meeting without any clear explanation of what the money is for, must be decisively done away with. The collection of money at mass meetings must be politicalized. The purpose of the collection must be very definitely stated. The audience must be moved to contribute by arousing its interest in the purpose of the collection and not by intellectual bludgeoning which defeats its own purpose. The carrying through of this change in methods of money raising will be such a relief to our audiences, they will be so thankful to us, that they will be more generous than ever before. Our present methods drive them away from us and seal up their pockets to our appeals.

5) The Party organizations must absolutely respect the independence and integrity of the financial systems of the mass organizations. The Party can place no tax upon these organizations. When it needs financial support, it must approach these organizations and independent bodies, stating the definite purpose of its needs and requesting these bodies to make voluntary donations for the stated purpose. The financial relations between the Party and non-Party organizations must be known and approved by the non-Party membership.

6) The distribution of finances must be reviewed and revised according to the principle of concentration. Unproductive overhead expenses must be drastically reduced. First consideration must be given to the needs of the lower organizations which are closest to the mass work. The needs of finances for mass agitation, our papers, leaflets, pamphlets, schools, etc., must be given preference over the maintenance of unproductive apparatus. The most serious economies must be carried through, especially by the elimination of

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unnecessary traveling expenses, long telegrams that can well be substituted by air mail letters which will arrive two or three hours later; and this is a very serious question for the *Daily Worker*, comrades. When it is necessary to send a telegram, there is such a thing as telegraphic language. Some people think they are too important to consider such things, but everyone must consider them.

7) The whole financial policy must be directed toward the aim that each organization shall build and maintain its own sources of revenue, to cover its own expense. It is clear that with the diversion to the lower organizations of much of the present revenue now received by the national office, the Center must make a very sharp cutting down of the present subsidies it gives to the weaker districts. This will have to be done gradually, while these weaker committees will, with the assistance of the Center, build up their own sources of revenue. We must take always into account certain organizations, which by their very nature require help from the other organizations. Here I refer particularly to the National Committee of the Unemployed Councils, which is a very important strategic organization for us, and now plays an important role. The Unemployed Councils always and necessarily will for a long period, consume all the revenue they can raise in the local organizations. The National Office cannot depend upon them for money. For such an organization as this we must work out a regular system, a continuous system, which operates month after month, of all the organizations which support the program of the Unemployed Councils giving a very small amount each month to the National Committee of the Unemployed Councils. If our organizations would give, for each member, 5 cents a year to the Unemployed Councils, this would support the whole national organization of the unemployed movement.

8) The system of financial responsibility and accounting must also be applied to the departmental activities within the Party which have their own financial systems. Funds for literature must everywhere be maintained intact; literature bills must be paid. This is not a business question, this is a political question, and you cannot have a serious mass educational movement until literature is sold, literature is paid for, literature funds are established and grow by the accumulation of the profits of literature sales. The proceeds from *Daily Worker* sales and collections must be strictly accounted for to the *Daily Worker* and not diverted to any other purpose. Sometimes our comrades take advantage of the business management of the *Daily Worker* continuing to send them papers although the bills are not paid; they sell the papers and then they use the money for whatever purpose happens to suit the fancy of the

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moment. Sometimes they want to start a new business, so they take the money of the *Daily Worker* and open up a book store, or further replenish the stock of the literature. By what right do they take the money of the *Daily Worker* to build the book shop? "Well, it doesn't make any difference—take it out of one pocket and put it in another, what difference does it make?"—"It all belongs to the movement anyway!" But, comrades, this is the kind of attitude that destroys our organization, destroys system, destroys responsibility and prevents us from building up anything.

We must have the most strict, intolerant attitude towards any kind of irregularity in the handling of finances and we have got to begin to make the entire movement understand this in unmistakable terms. And if it is impossible to carry through these measures otherwise, we must begin to make examples out of people who violate these principles before the entire movement.

HOW TO DISCUSS AND APPLY OPEN LETTER

The carrying through of the re-orientation of the entire Party toward the decisive proletarian masses presupposes a stirring up of the entire Party from below, the release of all the Party's forces to expression and activity; the development of a healthy Bolshevik self-criticism; the development of collective leadership and collective work in every unit and committee of the Party. To make the Open Letter the instrument to bring about this change, it will be necessary to discuss the letter in every unit and committee of the Party, in every fraction of the mass organizations. This discussion must not be abstract. It must be directed toward reviewing the work of that particular unit, fraction or committee in the light of the Open Letter and formulating on the basis of this discussion a resolution on the next tasks in which each one of these bodies sets itself a certain minimum set of control tasks, that we must do within a certain time, and that we will check up on every week to see whether we are doing it or not. Copies of these resolutions must be sent to the section, district and national office and furnish the basis for the further concretizing of the work of the higher bodies. The higher committees must base themselves on this work of concretization that is done in the lower units and fractions of the Party; the Central Committee setting certain minimum control tasks for the principal concentration districts.

What we are calling for is not merely a change in the work of the Central Committee but of the entire Party. We can build a mass Bolshevik party only through the conscious participation of every Party member. We can build it only through controlling the execution of our decisions, checking up on them, placing definite responsibility for particular work on each particular mem-

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ber—by helping the nuclei from the section committees, from the district committees and from the Central Committee to overcome their difficulties and solve their tasks.

The Central Committee is proposing that the Eighth Party Convention, originally intended to be held in May, shall be called together only toward the end of October. The motive of this proposal is in order to have time to really carry through the stirring up of the Party from the bottom, thoroughly review the entire work of the Party in every unit, committee and fraction, to formulate new plans on the basis of this review and have our first experiences in the serious attempt to carry through the turn to the masses started in the convention period.

On the basis of this discussion, these experiences, we can expect to be able to carry through a real refreshing of the leadership of the Party from bottom to top. We can expect to draw into all leading posts those comrades who have distinguished themselves in mass work. We can draw the fires of serious Bolshevik mass criticism against all those who remain passive or resist the necessary transformation of the Party's work in its turn to the masses. We can carry through a consolidation of all the healthiest and most energetic and most devoted forces of the Party in all the decisive points of Party leadership. The carrying through of this discussion does not mean a moratorium on practical work—on the contrary, it can only be fruitful if it is done in the midst of an intensified taking up of all the everyday tasks of the entire movement. The test of every comrade shall be not so much can he speak well about these problems, but can he work well in carrying out this line. How well can he put the Party Open Letter into practice in daily work?

All of the many-sided and often complex tasks which confront our Party will be carried through with greater success than ever before, if we learn the methods of concentration, if we learn to gather our forces for the most important tasks, if we learn to rouse and organize new forces among the masses, if we learn to draw in the basic proletarian elements into the fight, if we achieve a correct approach to the masses, apply a correct united front policy, if we learn to promote fresh proletarian leading cadres and train them politically, if we carry on a relentless struggle against "left" and right deviations, and if we develop collective work and politically activize the entire Party.

Are we able to carry through this change? Has the Party the necessary forces within itself to establish contacts with the masses and transform itself into a Bolshevik mass party? Of course we can do it. With all of its weaknesses, we have a Party which is proletarian in its composition, which is composed of the most loyal,

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devoted, energetic and enthusiastic elements, who are really the vanguard of the American proletariat. Our weaknesses can all be overcome, provided we really mobilize all of our forces, remove every obstruction, with the fullest utilization of every comrade, maintain Bolshevik unity of purpose and effort, establish a real inner Party democracy and fight energetically for the real carrying through of the turn to the masses. It depends upon us. The only guarantee for the carrying through of the line of this Open Letter is an aroused and active Party membership. We have faith that the Party members will unitedly respond to this call. That is why we called this special conference. That is why we propose to issue this Open Letter to the Party.

* * * *

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This special conference of our Party reflects the growing upsurge of the masses and the growing activity of our Party. This is its first characteristic. This conference constitutes additional proof of the ripeness of the situation for our Party to make some decisive steps forward in winning the masses and it also gives evidence of the growing efforts of the Party to accomplish this task.

Now to proceed to some of the questions of our discussion. The center of our discussions here has been how to understand, expose and combat the big offensive which the capitalist class is making upon the toiling masses, how to fight against the "new deal." We have considerably clarified this question for ourselves and have laid down the correct approach to the problems of carrying out in life the struggle against the "new deal." It was correctly said in the course of the discussion that the effects of this general attack upon the working class also provide us with an opportunity to make use of the broad uniform sweeping character of this attack to rouse the class consciousness of the masses of America. Whether we will make this use of the situation, however, depends upon whether we can learn to get away from abstract slogan-shouting, down to very concrete work among the masses on the basis of their immediate needs, mobilizing them for struggle for these needs on the basis of the united front.

SHOP BASE FOR FIGHTING N.I.R.A.

First of all it is clear that the central point in this struggle lies in the shops, around the shops, the penetration of the shops, the development of the struggle in the shops; upon this will depend the whole development of every phase of the resistance to the capitalist offensive and the development of a counter-offensive of the workers.

In the shops the fight against the "new deal" must be taken out of the clouds of high politics and expressed in terms of the im-

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mediate working conditions in the shops, the smallest issue, the question of wages and hours; making use of every special circumstance that arises out of any situation, to raise these demands among the workers and organize them in struggle for these demands. That means making the fullest possible use of every step of the government and of the employers in applying the Industrial Recovery Act to transform it into the opportunity to mobilize the masses against the application of the Recovery Act. That means making use of the formulation of the codes by the employers, and the hearings upon these codes by the government, to bring the demands of the workers, to fight for them, and to spread the knowledge of these demands among the broadest masses and rouse them to expressions of support and to concrete organizational measures.

Second, this means taking some further steps. In the development of the textile code, for example, which has been cited in our reports here as a model for the other industries, we must declare that this is a model only in the sense that it is the best attempt in this direction and indicates the general line which all of the other counter-codes that we present and fight for will have to take.

However, this was not a model *how* to work out the demands. Perhaps I can betray a little secret and tell you that on the day before these demands were to be presented we did not as yet know what they were to be, concretely, and certainly the broad masses of textile workers did not know. A few leading comrades sat down a couple of hours before train time and hammered out these demands in an office. Under the circumstances it is quite extraordinary how successful they were. But please don't take this, you comrades in the mining industry, steel and marine industry, as an example of how to work out these demands. Now we have sufficient time to take at least the first steps in the drawing in of the masses of workers into the formulation of further demands and spread them, broadcast them, among the masses before they are presented in public hearings. And only when we do this will we really begin the proper method of mobilizing mass struggle against the "new deal."

It is unfortunate that in all our discussion there was so little attention paid to the question of the concrete demands contained in the textile code as we presented it.

Comrade Stachel in his excellent report went into great detail on this question. The fact that the comrades did not react to discussion of these things proves that the comrades have not really faced all of these issues yet down among the workers where all these questions of formulation of codes become an object of the most intense discussion and attention.

We cannot take these formulations lightly. They are of the most serious importance to the workers and only if we engage the

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workers in a discussion on these things and also prove to the workers that we can intelligently discuss these things will we be able to mobilize them in this fight.

Third, it must be made very clear that while our central attention is given to crystalizing our organizations in the shops and building up the revolutionary trade unions, in every case where the employers are carrying through their company union system—the system of employers' representation organized by the companies—we do not boycott those elections but put forward, encourage and lead the most active and best elements, our members and sympathizers and everyone that we can reach, to put forward our demands in those elections and within those systems of employees' representation, fight for the codes and demands that we work out. We already have experience showing that this is possible and also proving the excellent results that we can achieve by making use of every opportunity of this kind.

Next, we must emphasize the necessity to make use of every one of these issues from our shop basis and from outside the shop when we have no direct connection with particular shops, to raise these questions inside the A. F. of L. unions where they exist whether these are old established unions or whether these are the most recently called meetings of the A. F. of L.; to go into every such meeting and every union of the A. F. of L.; to raise very concretely all these issues around the fight for conditions, for wages and hours contained in our counter-codes and to crystalize the left opposition.

All of this work must be orientated around the central problems of building trade unions in all those industries where we are building the red unions now. We must make use of the very illusions among the workers, the illusions that they have some opportunity to organize, the illusions that they have some sort of choice as to what organization they shall join, and crystalize struggle to realize these things. And although we know that the purpose of the law is exactly to defeat these things, we can, by making use of their resentment against the denial of any of these rights, rouse and organize them into struggle and realize this by their own strength.

A tremendous role will be played in this process by making use of this activity that is going on, especially in the basic industries, to crystalize small struggles, to crystalize the dissatisfaction of the workers around the small demands for improvement of conditions, sanitary conditions, and every little victory that is gained will be a crystalization of class struggle organization inside the shops.

And finally on the basis of all of this detailed work, agitation, propaganda, organization within the shops and around the shops upon the basis of the smallest questions leading up to the largest

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questions, to systematically bring before the workers the perspective of big mass strikes in order to realize their larger demands.

FURTHER TASKS AMONG THE UNEMPLOYED

Next in importance in the development of mass struggles is the fight around the question of the forced labor camps and public works. It must be said that we have not given sufficient attention to this. This work has tremendous possibilities and is directly connected with the shop problems and especially with the building of the trade unions. It is precisely the forced labor camps and public works that constitute one of the most direct and easily recognizable blows which the capitalists are giving against the workers' conditions, hours and wages, especially in the basic industries. The central point in this fight is the demand and struggle for trade union wages on all public works, the fight against forced labor and for the establishment of trade union wages. In the forced labor camps it is also the fight for cash payments, the elimination of all payments in kind and the withholding of money for long periods. We must put forward against the government plans for public works our own proposals; we must formulate definite proposals which we can place before the masses for a public works program, to provide housing for the workers, hospitals, schools, etc., as against the government proposals which are directed towards military purposes or the service of big corporations. We must develop in the forced labor camps the struggle against the military regime within them. We must make a fight for self-government, the regulation of these camps by elected committees within them to break down the military discipline. We must make a struggle for better food, housing and sanitary conditions. We must make mass exposures of the conditions that exist in these labor camps by letters from inside the camps, by leaflets based upon these inside exposures, the concretizing of these exposures in definite reports by those inside the camps, by sending delegations elected on the outside to go into the camps, by holding meetings to report on these conditions, and so forth. And finally, by directing the efforts within the forced labor camps towards large scale strikes to realize these demands.

Among the unemployed masses, the struggle is being exceptionally sharpened by the latest phase of the "new deal" and we must develop a counter-offensive through our unemployed organizations, developing a real mass fight against those relief cuts which are taking place almost everywhere throughout the United States today, intensifying the fight for cash relief, against the system of food vouchers, etc. We must organize on a broader scale against evictions which now in the summer months have again greatly intensified. The problem of evictions is becoming an acute mass problem again.

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We must give more attention to the struggle for conditions in the flop houses. We have largely ignored the fact that this summer when relief generally is being cut down the flop houses are growing, the number of inmates is swelling and there is a definite program to force larger numbers who formerly got relief into the flop houses. It is one of the essential features of the struggle against the "new deal" that we shall counter this move by real movement amongst these large masses, who have been forced into the flop houses by the cutting down of relief. Our experiences have proven that everywhere in these flop houses we are not dealing with lumpen-proletariat, we are dealing with workers who come from the basic sections of the American working class, and everywhere where we have touched these flop houses, we have been able to find live elements among them, capable men, natural leaders. A little bit of attention will bring forward splendid cadres.

Further, we must give more attention to the development of the work for taxation of the big companies to pay relief to the workers discharged from the factories. It should be recalled what an important part is being played by mass resentment against Ford's throwing of the tax burdens onto the small people, the home owners, property owners and the masses in Dearborn. This has roused the greatest impetus to struggle against Ford and has created the conditions whereby we have been able to emerge from illegality in the city of Dearborn. The same thing can be developed in every company town, provided we study every case very carefully, develop the issues very concretely and prove to the masses that we know what we are talking about.

At the present moment we must very sharply bring forward a demand of the unemployed for the diversion of war funds for unemployment relief. At the present moment when hundreds of millions of dollars have been appropriated for the construction of war ships and other military purposes, this is most important for tying up the struggle of the unemployed masses with the anti-war struggle, deepening the understanding of the whole class struggle.

We must make much more effective use than we have hitherto of the fact that the government, while cutting down the funds for unemployed, is increasing tremendously the direct subsidies to the big capitalists. We must follow up every development of the operations of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and, for example, every time another $50,000,000 is given to the banks of Detroit, the comrades must make known through the masses of Detroit, that while the government is giving these millions of dollars to the banks, Detroit relief has been cut down below what it was in 1931. The demand to divert these government subsidies to the relief of the unemployed is an issue on which we can really

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rouse the masses. We must take much more energetic steps to bind together the struggle of the employed and unemployed, to bring expressions of support from the workers in the shops to every struggle of the unemployed, even if it is only a resolution or leaflet, even the smallest expression will grow and develop into something bigger. At the same time, more carefully and more systematically and energetically bring the unemployed workers into active participation in every struggle that takes place in and around the shops in support of the demands of the employed workers.

In every city there is a whole maze of concrete issues surrounding relief funds, of graft and favoritism which mark their administration. It is a shameful thing for us to admit that the capitalist gutter press has done more to expose and exploit the graft in relief funds than the Communists have done, than the Unemployed Councils have done. We must take up this issue in every city and put up the demand for workers' inspection and control of all funds for unemployment relief.

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST REFORMISM

Now just a few words about some of the problems connected with reaching the masses in the reformist organizations. We have emphasized in the report and in the discussion that the very first prerequisite for success in winning of these workers who are in organizations hostile to us is a creation of a sympathetic approach to them. This is the main significance of our maneuvers on the united front; the calling of conferences, the sending of letters; issuance of manifestos, etc., directed to these organizations. It is to create the approach to these workers and provide the opportunity to raise these issues concretely.

This requires not only the proper kind of documents and conferences. Above all it requires an active and sympathetic contact with these workers down below. The offering of joint actions for concrete demands, the methods that must be carried through at every step and especially in the development of the united front below, the development of such joint actions is the only possible basis for a real building up of a fighting united front. Our united front is a united front of struggle.

The greatest weakness which we have in carrying through our united front policy is that our comrades carry over the very bad habits of commandeering workers, of not taking carefully into consideration all special organizational peculiarities and habits and traditions, of ordering about workers as soldiers in an army, of which we are the officers and in which we direct their activities. All these habits of commandeering, of arbitrary approach to non-Party workers, will mean death to every effort of the united front. Especially if we go down among the basic sections of the American working

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class, we will find every trace of this old military approach; this old commanding approach will not only hinder any progress among these workers, but even more, these workers will throw us out on our necks when we try to use these methods among them.

In the building of united front committees with these workers, a few little directives, if always kept in mind in the practical carrying through, will be of great help. For example, let us always remember that we want big committees and we will find the social-fascist leading elements will always want little committees. We want the biggest possible committees because the bigger they are, the more likely they are to have healthy proletarian elements among them who will join with us on the concrete issues that we raise.

Second, never have secret negotiations on the united front. Let every step of the negotiations of the setting up of united front committees always be reported to our members and to the workers generally.

Third, we must absolutely break down this idea that the establishment of a united front means the stopping of criticism. It is true that we have to learn much more effective methods of criticism. We have got to be restrained in our language in the development of criticism within these united front efforts. But we must be unhesitating, we must be bold in the raising of every issue on which criticism is required. Every hesitation of the leading elements of these reformist organizations, to carry through struggles that have been decided upon, every hesitation to join in a mass action that is initiated by other organizations, every sabotage, every holding back must be criticized. Failure to criticize these things on our part means to surrender to the social-fascists in the name of the united front. A committee which does not make fighting conclusions is not a united front. It is a sabotage of the united front.

We must give very careful examination to all of the problems around the penetration of A.F. of L. unions, Socialist Party and Musteite organizations; study the special prejudices that all of these workers have, and concretely develop our issues suited to the special circumstances within each organization.

The united front is not a peace pact with the reformists. The united front is a method of struggle against the reformists, against the social-fascists, for the possession of the masses. It is necessary to emphasize this, because is was not clear in the discussion that all the comrades understand it. Some of the comrades in the discussion here have given an argument like this: "Well, maybe you fellows in New York know what you are doing when you enter into a united front with the Musteites. We have our doubts, but we won't venture to criticize this much at the moment, but we want to tell you that this united front doesn't apply to our district. In our district, these Musteites are betraying the working class." But,

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comrades, whoever told you that the Musteites don't betray the working class in New York City? Did you think we are making the united front with the Musteites because we have suddenly become convinced that they are good class conscious fighters, good leaders of the working class? Have you forgotten that precisely the reason why we make the united front with them is because we have got to take their followers away from them? And if you want to enter into a struggle, you must get within striking distance. It is quite remarkable that we are told, for example, that down in the Carolinas, I think it is, a Musteite is systematically betraying the workers down there, and therefore this Musteite who has signed some of our joint manifestos can't have a united front with our comrades in the Carolinas. Why didn't the comrades make a campaign against this fellow before? If our united front with the Musteites has brought sharply before the comrades in Carolina the necessity of conducting a mass campaign against all the betrayals going on down there, that is a proof then of the correctness of our application of the tactic of the united front with the Musteites. Our united front with the Musteites is not a means of silencing our criticism of any one of their betrayals. It is a means of making our criticism more effective by making it reach their own followers and winning their workers to a line of class struggle.

It is necessary to emphasize that the unorganized workers are also a proper subject of approach with the tactic of the united front. Just because a worker is not in an organization doesn't mean that we don't have to use special means to reach him and bring him into struggle. Hundreds of thousands of workers who are unorganized yet have a mentality which is determined precisely along the same lines as those of the workers within the A.F. of L. or the Socialist Party. They have the same prejudices to be overcome and they have to be approached in much the same way.

We must emphasize all of these things in connection with the calling of the conference in Cleveland on August 26 and 27, a United Front Conference for Struggle Against the "New Deal." This conference call which will be issued in a few days is a joint call by Communists, Musteites, leaders of Unemployed Councils, etc., quite a heterogeneous gathering of names that are signed to it. Let us again ask the comrades to assure all of our workers out in the field that when they get this manifesto, they are not to understand it as a declaration of peace between us and the reformists. On the contrary, this manifesto which sets down all of the basic proposals of our struggle against the "New Deal" must be taken as a test of the activities of every leader in every district, in every town on all questions about the Industrial Recovery Act, all questions about trade union struggle, all questions of the unemployed, and if any of these leaders don't go along with the struggle and really

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contribute to the struggle for these things, then it is our duty to begin immediate criticism, sharp criticism, rouse the masses against their violation of the program to which they or their leaders have affixed their signatures and use this as a weapon to destroy their influence among the workers among which they operate.

The movement for unity of the Unemployed Councils together with the Unemployed Leagues, and other unemployed organizations, must receive very careful attention. Let us again remind ourselves that this unity movement of the unemployed is not a love-feast, it is a struggle. We are fighting for unity, and we are fighting for the masses. We are fighting to win the masses to the support of our program. All of the elements in these other organizations, no matter who they may be, we welcome if they really support and fight for this program of struggle, but we will fight against them to the extent they hesitate, sabotage or oppose this basic program of struggle.

In the development of the unity movement of the unemployed, we must concentrate on unity from below, the bringing together of the different unemployed organizations on a neighborhood, city, township and county scale, and try to create a solid foundation to actually achieve unity from below. On the basis of this, we can proceed to larger unity moves on a national scale.

The concrete efforts towards applying this tactic to unify the trade union forces in each industry, especially in coal, textile, etc., are one of the essential features of this whole movement. In the August 26 Cleveland conference, we hope to be able to have the central role played by the trade union and the trade union questions—the questions of the struggle for shop conditions, hours and wages and the unification of the existing militant trade unions.

In this whole struggle against the "new deal," the central unifying issue around which everything else is organized is the struggle for social insurance. In reviewing our discussion of the past days, social insurance and the concrete questions of how we are carrying through the campaign for social insurance in each industry and in each district, did not occupy a sufficiently central place. This reflects that we have not, even in the last weeks since we have begun to write good resolutions and articles about it, really taken up in a serious fashion the struggle for social insurance.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF SHOP CONCENTRATION

Now I want to speak of some of the special problems of shop concentration. The first point in shop concentration is picking out the shop to concentrate on. There are three guiding lines for the picking out of a shop. First, we must make our main points the biggest, most important key shops in each industry and each locality.

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If we do not do that, we are running away from the main problem. The main important forces, the most able forces must be directed towards these, which are usually also the most difficult points.

At the same time, let us keep in mind what the Detroit comrades described as picking out the strongest and weakest links for concentration. Some of the first successes of our Auto Workers Union came from concentrating not only on the biggest plants, but simultaneously also on some of the weaker and smaller plants. And especially when these can be combined in one region, one town, this combination will often be found very valuable. Of course, where we have forces on the inside, this is often a good reason for beginning some concentrated work on the factory.

One of the problems of shop concentration is always the relation of outside and inside work and whether an outsider can do work in a shop or in a particular industry. In this respect I want to refer to the speech of Comrade Ray of the Marine Workers. I noticed particularly that Comrade Ray said that what he was interested in was that the people who are going to do marine work must study the problems of the marine industry. He complained that this position of his had been misinterpreted as meaning that nobody could go into the marine work except marine workers themselves. This is very important for us. Comrade Ray is correct when he says nobody can do marine work who goes in with a know-it-all attitude, to run the marine workers' business like he once ran a cooperative store, or like a branch of the I.W.O. or the I.L.D.

Every factory is to be studied concretely and a concrete plan of campaign mapped out. All that we can learn from other experiences is the general principle, to learn the mistakes to be avoided, to learn how to direct our forces towards these concrete questions. Different factories have different problems—big factories different ones from the little and all the experiences we have gained help us in all factory work. We have to work out special problems of approaching different kinds of industry.

We must at the same time not forget that in all of the shop work the question of conspiracy is more and more important, the question of illegal work, how to get open organizations and at the same time protect our organization on the inside.

In this connection the problem of winning new forces among the masses and giving them the opportunity of developing in the struggle is of growing importance. We have many good examples of this given to this Party conference. One especially good thing is in the speech of Comrade Abraham of Connecticut. This is an example of real mass work and the development of new forces.

Comrades, in all of this work one of the things that we must learn is how to make use of small successes, to proceed further. We are often in this fix: as long as we are not successful in an im-

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mediate objective we always know just what to do. But when we win, we don't always know what to do next.

The problem of penetration of the shops and the problem of the development of the strike movement, the problem of building the trade unions, is the problem of how to develop confidence *among the masses in our leadership,* by showing them we know how to do things, by winning one thing here and winning one thing there, always make one thing lead to another, to a higher stage of struggle, or broadening out the struggle, or deepening the political character of it. Moving from success to success, making of every success the foundation of immediately moving forward to another one. In this, we have one of the basic principles of concentration.

Why do we concentrate on one key shop? Is it because we think that this big shop is important, but the whole industry is not important? By no means! Our concentration is no narrowing down. Our concentration is to win a strategic point precisely because a success there will move the entire industry, or move at least the entire locality, whereas if we concentrate on the whole locality and the whole industry, it will take us so long to move it that the workers will be somewhere else by the time we get anything done.

The whole principle of concentration is to throw all the forces into one point, and win a success there, and by that success you double your forces, and can go on to move the entire mass. The very example of a success in a strategic locality, in a shop or organization, will very often set the whole mass into motion, bring them either under our leadership, or in the direction moving towards us.

In this respect, we have to give the most serious attention to the problems of consolidating the organization during and after an action. One of the most important contributions to our movement in this whole last period, has been the nut-pickers' strike in St. Louis, precisely because it gave us a living example of the consolidation of a mass organization in the course of the struggle, maintaining it after the struggle. This problem as we have seen very clearly from the reports on the nut pickers' struggle, the needle trades workers' strike in South Chicago, and more in the negative sense, although not negative entirely by any means, our experience in the auto workers' strike. We see that this whole problem is one of involving the new members in tasks within the organization, inside the shop, and also giving them tasks outside the shop, in spreading the organization into other shops, and even into other industries. I am certain that one of the main reasons for the successful consolidation of the nut pickers' union is the fact that this union immediately set itself the task not only of organizing all of its own industry, but of organizing the needle trades shops in the vicinity in St. Louis, and even beginning to organize the men folk of these women, who work in basic industries, railroads, metal shops, etc.

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I think that perhaps the best example of a very systematic, conscious carrying through of this approach to all of the practical problems of struggle, in the building of organization, was contained in the speech which Comrade M——— made, in which he told us about his work in the Black Belt, about the building of the share croppers' union. I felt as I listened to that report, that I was watching the working out of the theses written by Lenin. I don't know how much of Lenin's writings Comrade M——— has read, but one thing is certain, that he applies the teachings of Lenin in life better than most of our scholars in the American movement. Comrade M——— gave us a picture of a movement developed in what is usually considered the most backward section of the American toiling masses, and the astonishing completeness of each phase of this work is shown by the fact that in his short report of the activities of the past several months, we had every feature of the international class struggle, developed concretely in life from the smallest problem up to the largest problem in the fight against German fascism, imperialist war, and support of the S.U.

If there is anybody who thinks there is a contradiction between the struggle for the immediate demands and the highest politicalization of this struggle, just take a lesson from the work of Comrade M———, who has politicalized the share croppers in the South, and made them an integral, conscious part of the international revolutionary movement.

A few words about the concentration industries and districts. Here I want to utter just a little word of warning against some tendencies of crystalizing some brother theories to go along with the theory of concentration. Some comrades want to emphasize that concentration on one thing means the neglect of another. Now it is often true that we are so badly organized ourselves, and so badly prepared to concentrate that in our first beginnings of concentration, we will tend to neglect other things. But let's not make a theory of it and justify that neglect. No. And especially let's not only avoid, but let's set ourselves the task of stamping out any tendency, such as was described by Comrade Ben Gold this afternoon, when he said that some comrades sneer at the needle trades work, the needle trades work is some kind of inferior work, that the only thing a respectable Communist would consider doing is the work among the miners and steel. It is true, and must be emphasized, that it is more important and a greater achievement to organize 500 workers in a steel mill than it is to organize 5,000 workers in a multitude of small shops in light industry; that is a basic guiding principle for us, the central feature of concentration. But that does not mean that we are going to neglect the needle

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workers or that we are going to put work among the needle workers in a sort of second class citizenship.

The building up of our forces in the basic industries is our first and central concentration not because we do not want workers in light industry, or because it is not important, but because we can more quickly win the masses and can consolidate the revolutionary organizations among the masses by making our base the heavy industry. Precisely the importance of heavy industry is that a little organization there will swing into action a broad number of workers in light industry, but a little organization in light industry will not swing heavy industry into motion. That is, we concentrate on heavy industry because it is a lever by which we can move the whole mass. The whole mass of workers are "our" workers, and every one of them is equally important for the revolutionary movement. Factories in light industry can also be made to help serve the task of conquering heavy industry, although the main feature is the other way around, that heavy industry gives us a lever by which we can move more workers in light industry into action.

THE INSTRUMENTS OF CONCENTRATION

What are our instruments of concentration? Our concentration point for all our work is the unit and the section of the Party. The section organizations are going to be the backbone of the Party, and if the sections are weak the Party will be weak. If the sections do not have strong consolidated collective leadership with political initiative with capacity and self-confidence, then the Party will not move forward. We must make use of every means of concentration, every feature of our work must carry through the principle of concentration: Party organizations, the trade unions, Unemployed Councils, workers' clubs, I.W.O., I.L.D., language clubs, language press, all of these are tremendous instruments for us. We often forget that the language organizations and the language press are still our greatest mass instrument or could be if we would make intelligent use of it. But the point we must continue to emphasize is that the central instrument for carrying through the turn to the masses is the Party section and the Party unit.

Our trade union organizations play a very important role in all of this work. Here we must say that we still have the continuation of certain old bad traditions of work which we must liquidate. We have a method of work which could be described as trying to build our revolutionary unions from the top down. The process seems to be that first you get a national office and a set of national officers and supplies of paper and all of the appliances of a union and then you go out and try to find some members. Now, of course, I am exaggerating a little. But that is a tendency shown in our work. We have to reverse that process, we must get membership in the

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local unions and shop branches and then begin to build the national union on that foundation. That does not mean that the existing union offices do not have a role to play. They do. It is necessary to have these offices. But if we are going to expect these offices to make a change in our trade union work and to build up unions down below, we are going to continue the experiences of the past. Let us understand this. The task of building red trade unions in the basic industries is a task that can only be carried through by mobilization of all forces of the Party down in the units and sections, concentrating on this job and building up membership and organization from below, and keeping away all of this pressure of a top-heavy apparatus that crushes the life out of the little union before it has a chance to grow. Eliminate all of this pressure at the top that it is possible to eliminate and give this new plant of the trade union that is trying to grow a little bit of air and sunshine and a chance to expand; to grow down below, and it will soon be big enough to carry a bit of apparatus above. But if we start with an apparatus above it is going to crush and kill it.

I think that all of our unions suffer, even the most successful of them, from top-heavy apparatus and not enough work down below, not enough real membership organization at the base, with trade union democracy, with a living, collective experience, with a common life that produces, gathers together and organizes all the energies of these masses.

The Marine Workers Union is not by any means the worst organization in this respect. The Marine Workers Union has shown some healthy signs of growth. Still we must say that it also suffers somewhat from this. Comrade Hudson made a very good speech in this Party plenum. It was the speech of a man in a position of responsibility for a mass organization and fighting for the building up of that organization, and with a lot of confidence that it is going to be built up. That is what we need—fighters, men who know what they want and will fight to get it, and we can only have the greatest respect for Comrade Hudson for bringing forward his opinions very strongly and boldly. Most of these opinions are correct ones, and especially his criticism of the lack of sufficient serious attention to the marine industry by the entire Party. Every district of the Party that has marine industry in it, should take this question very seriously, especially the Pacific Coast districts.

This problem is especially sharp for the Steel Workers Union. Comrades, we have hundreds of steel workers in our Party. Can anybody say that there aren't enough forces among all these steel-worker Party members to provide everything that is necessary to build a steel workers' union? Are steel workers so incapable that we have to draw food workers and needle workers from New

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York to build the steel union? I think not. If I know anything about the histories of Communist Parties in other places, then I must say it is precisely the steel workers who have to furnish the best cadres not only to build the Steel Workers Union, but the best cadres for the entire Communist Party in the United States. The Bolshevik Party in the Soviet Union has as one of its principal features that the metal workers have furnished, through the entire history of the Bolshevik Party, the most important and the largest section of the leading cadres of the Russian Bolsheviks. And if you go to the Soviet Union and look around, you find metal workers everywhere—in this place and in that place and in every position of especial responsibility. And this is not an accident. This is a basic question for a proletarian party. It is precisely the metal workers, the miners, that will furnish the main cadres for a real revolutionary working class Party, and certainly they will furnish the cadres that will build the unions in their own industry.

The cry for forces must be turned away from the center and down to the units and the sections. The cry for forces must be turned into the shops and we will get our forces from down below, and these forces gotten right out of the work and out of the movement will be worth a hundred times as much as the forces taken out of the ice-box of the national office and shipped around by mail order! (Laughter, applause)

Our task, comrades, is the task of the creation of new cadres—the building of a mass trade union is the building of cadres. If you don't build these new cadres you haven't built any union, you have only created the appearance of a union—you have built a paper house, a house that will fall down with the first wind that blows. And the reason why our unions that we rebuild and rebuild, year after year, don't stay built is because we are doing it always with outside cadres, importing the cadres, giving no attention to the building up of new forces down below that have a solid foundation there and will stay put year after year, whose only possibility of living is the building up of the union right there. If you do not do that you have not built anything. This is true of every mass organization. The only real solid building of anything is the building of stable cadres from among the masses, the membership of this organization. The role of the office in all of the work of building an organization is a very small one. You need a national office for a union to provide all of the organization with uniform organizational materials, to provide the apparatus for bringing together the consultations and conferences of all the various parts, you require a leader who works collectively with a larger group, a group that meets from time to time to work out the basic principles and tactics of the organization, and at least one national leader who makes it his responsibility to keep in touch with all the

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parts of this organization, to respond on the new issues, to advise for the various parts, but between this buro and lower organizations, the masses, is about this ratio, one per cent the buro, ninety-nine per cent the lower organizations.

The approach to the problems of building an organization from the point of view of an office is bureaucracy and the only time when the office does not become a danger to the organization is when it is the product of the effort of an organization from below.

We must carry this principle of concentration into all developments of our work. The concentration is a principle that applies to every organization, to every committee of the work, to the work of each individual. Our *Daily Worker* must concentrate, our Agitprop Department must concentrate, our school system must concentrate, and especially the schools in the selection of our students, we must select them on the basis of concentration for the producing of leaders out of the basic industries for work there.

WORK AMONG NEGRO FARMERS AND COLONIAL MASSES

Some of the Negro comrades criticized my report for a lack of sufficient emphasis upon the importance of Negro work. I accept that criticism because I am sure that we have failed to get sufficient political emphasis upon the importance of the proper solution of all of our problems of work among the Negroes. We have not yet made a decisive change in our work in Harlem. We have not yet consolidated our political influence in Harlem into an organization which knows its tasks, which feels itself as an integral part of our Party, and which is proceeding boldly to the solution of its mass tasks in Harlem. Nor have we achieved this anywhere else, unless we except the South where the work that has been done by Comrade M——— with the share croppers' union seems to be a real solid base about which we do not have to have any uneasiness at all. But Harlem, Chicago, and the other big cities with a Negro population, we have not yet really consolidated our Party among them. At the same time we have really made enormous progress in extending our general political influence among the Negroes. Basically this question is a question really of overcoming the distrust that the Negroes have for white workers, a distrust which they also bring towards our Party, a distrust which will continue just as long as they see any remaining influences within our Party of the ideology of white chauvinism. The struggle against white chauvinism by the white comrades of our Party is the basic means for the liquidation of the distrust of the Negroes. At the same time there is another necessary task to be followed, and that is that especially our leading Negro comrades shall take it as one of their first tasks to try to instil confidence in our Party among the Negro masses, especially by giving examples to the Negro masses

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of Negro Party members and leaders who have the most complete confidence in the Party. A big step will be made in solving this problem by us when we really find the road to a mass organization of the Negro liberation struggle.

The large part of the dissatisfaction among the Negro comrades arises from the fact that they feel that some important problems have not been solved. They may not be conscious of it but in the first place it is the feeling of the necessity that this Negro liberation struggle shall have a broad mass organizational expression, and this is one of the most important features of the consolidation of the Party among the Negroes.

One criticism that has been made by some Negro comrades in Harlem with regard to the leaders of the Party we must declare is correct. We have not given sufficient attention to the solving of the problems of Harlem and have not given enough direct leadership from the leading comrades of the Center to Harlem. Harlem is certainly important enough for us to give our best forces as its leadership. We have discussed this question, we have taken up the spontaneous mass proposals that came out of this conference to have Comrade Ford go into Harlem as the Section Organizer.

One of the weaknesses of my report was that I gave little attention to the question of our work among the farmers. It is now so late that I can't remedy this weakness in my summing up either. Let me just say very briefly that Comrade Puro's report here at this conference and especially the very detailed resolution on our agrarian work which goes into the most minute examination of our basic problems must receive the attention of the entire Party. This resolution you are going to be asked to vote on and adopt at this conference. If you adopt it, it becomes a basic decision of the Party that there must be a discussion on the agrarian work in every unit of the Party, in every committee of the Party. The problem of the farmers, work among the farmers, is not merely a problem of those organizers that we send out among them. It is a problem of the entire Party, of the allies of the proletariat, a problem which is of importance to everyone who is seriously looking forward to the struggle for power in the U.S.

We can also accept the criticism that was made by our Latin-American comrades that this conference and that the Party generally gives insufficient attention to the colonial work, that is, to the work for the support of the liberation struggle in the colonies in Latin America, in the Philippine Islands, and also to our work among the colonial emigrants in the United States. That is certainly true.

We must begin to find a way to remedy this weakness. We must especially strengthen our work among the colonial emigrants here. We must especially begin to have systematic work and a mass

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paper for the Latin-American emigrants, we must have a leading buro among the Latin Americans. In this respect we should by all means at this conference send a message of greetings to the new Communist Party in the Philippine Islands (*Applause*) whose leaders are under long prison and exile sentences, sentences which are being put into execution by the new "liberal" Governor-General of the Philippine Islands, Frank Murphy, from Detroit; and the sentence will be executed now, this moment, largely because the Philippine Party was not able to finance the court proceedings to carry these cases higher to the United States Supreme Court. And due to our slowness here we did not raise money quickly enough to get these papers. Certainly the least we can do is provide some support to the colonial movement, to at least carry through the appeals of the comrades to support them against the imprisonment.

I must say a word or two in emphasis of some immediate problems in the anti-war struggle. August First is coming, comrades, and I am afraid that our preparations for August First are not as strong as they should be. I am quite certain that our campaign in the press needs considerable strengthening. I am afraid that this is more true of the language press than it is of the *Daily Worker*.

Comrades, we must emphasize very much at this moment the importance of the August First demonstrations. Every day now is bringing additional news of aggressive moves of the Japanese on the Siberian-Manchurian frontiers. There is every indication of certain large scale war developments in the near future. The imperialist contradictions are at the breaking point and capitalist statesmen are turning every stone to find a temporary outlet by the starting of a war adventure against the Soviet Union. Precisely at this period our August First demonstrations, the 19th anniversary of the outbreak of the World War, must be made a serious mass mobilization. We must put a little bit of that feeling of the imminence of war, that feeling of apprehensiveness and alarm into our mass preparations for August First, that is really justified by all the facts of the world situation.

Further about the the Anti-War Congress in New York on Labor Day. The Socialist Party and its allies have definitely decided to enter into this Anti-War Congress. This serves to emphasize all the more the absolute necessity of really making a mobilization of delegates from all working-class organizations to this Anti-War Congress to really guarantee that this Congress will be an expression of a proletarian anti-war program, that it will place before the masses of the United States very sharp and clear by the position of the overwhelming mass of the delegates who will come to it the real great task of the struggle against war, that it will prevent any possibilities of the transforming of this Congress into a field of maneuvers for the social-fascists.

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RECRUITING AND DAILY WORKER CIRCULATION SERIOUS TASKS

Comrades, central in all of this work that we have been talking about is the problem of recruiting to the Party. Recruiting is not taken as a serious task of our Party today. Comrade Peter gave you the very bitter facts about our vital statistics.

On the question of recruiting, and that twin question of *Daily Worker* circulation, these two things that are the very lifeblood of our whole movement, how many comrades really take this question seriously? I think that we must establish some new habits in the Party, establish a certain fashion about recruiting. We must establish it as a normal part of our Party life that every member of the Party constantly has two, three, four or five workers that he is in contact with, preparing them to become members of the Party, working on them systematically, talking with them, giving them literature, engaging them in discussion, developing them politically, bring them to the Party, and himself personally taking them to the Party unit, adjusting them to Party life, becoming their guide in the very difficult task of becoming a Communist Party member.

It is a difficult task to become a Communist Party member. If you were an auto worker in Detroit and wanted to join the Party, how would you go about it? You might get engaged in a big strike movement and try to join that way. Would a comrade come up to this worker and say, "John, I know you want to join the Communist Party. I will show you how to do it." I am afraid it would not happen, not if Detroit continues the way it has in the past. What is true of Detroit is true of other districts. It is a difficult task to get into our Party. We must make it easier. Let us put the question of recruiting on the order of business in every Party unit, let us make it the business of every leading committee.

Recruiting also means concentration, means the selection not only of the best elements among the workers, but concentrating among those workers whom we especially need, miners, steel workers, marine workers, textile workers, a concentrated recruiting campaign in the basic industries of the country and together with the recruiting and as one of the instruments of the recruiting the building up of the circulation of the *Daily Worker*.

These things, building the Party, recruiting new members, circulating the *Daily Worker*, these are the very essential elements of carrying through struggle. Before struggles, during struggles and after struggles, these things are the constant tasks of the Party. But we forget it. We divert all of our attention to things of second consequence and neglect this basic task. In this respect also we even forget the history of our Party. How many times has the Party celebrated the anniversary of its birth? It is one of the tests of conscious existence if a Party will remember its own birthday or not.

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Our Party forgets its birthday. Our Party has got a birthday coming next September, and we want to make this Party birthday a campaign of education of our Party members and broad circles of sympathizing workers in the history of our Party, the significance of our Party, as a means of Party recruiting and Party consolidation.

What I have said about the Party applies with much greater significance to the Young Communist League, who have all of our problems in a sharply accentuated form, and the additional problem, that they are supposed to rely on the Party for leadership and the Party doesn't give it. Serious attention must be given to the leading of the work of building a mass Young Communist League.

We have to accept the criticism the youth have made of our work, draw the consequences and take steps to remedy this.

One more word about the question of the financial sanitation of our movement and about the question of apparatus. I think that the conference can emphasize every word that has been said on this and certainly if there was anyone who had any doubts about these problems brought forward, he kept these doubts to himself. We convinced everybody of the necessity of a real reorganization of all of these measures of financial control. At the same time let us recall again and emphasize here that this means also the real examination of the apparatus of the Party and of the mass organizations, especially the top apparatus and a real ruthless and even brutal cutting down of the apparatus above and the transferring of resources to the lower organizations.

With regard to the problems of democratizing the sources of revenue, I should also call attention to the fact that the Central Committee is going to issue a new means of raising money in the form of contribution stamps and sympathizers' cards for our sympathizers. That is a means of systematizing and regularizing small donations of sympathizers, of workers and other elements who want to help, but don't want to assume the responsibilities of Party membership. This system will be explained to all of the Party organizations in the near future, and should be taken as one of the real means of systematizing and democratizing our revenue system.

Without going into any detail, I must remind the conference as a part of the summary, that we are still neglecting the anti-militarist work—the work of penetration of the armed forces. Every District has special duties in this respect. Very important work is being done in this field. We must emphasize again to all responsible comrades in the Districts, a most careful attention to the development of this anti-militarist work—the penetration of the armed forces.

OPEN LETTER IS OPEN MASS CRITICISM

Now, comrades, how are we going to carry out the Open Letter? If there was one questioning note that was sounded in the dis-

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cussion it was not about the correctness of the Open Letter, but some comrades were still doubtful as to whether we are really going to carry it through or not. Well, I think that we can say that we have more reason for expecting to make the change today than we had before. I received this afternoon some evidence of this. You remember, I think it was Saturday night, this conference heard the speech of a representative of a certain shop nucleus engaged in a government enterprise. Well, this comrade had no sooner made his speech to the special Party conference, but the next day his unit met, took up the question of his report to the conference, discussed it, examined it, brought out the weaknesses of this report, and the nucleus itself worked out a resolution and sent it to this special Party conference correcting all of the weaknesses of the report of its delegate and declaring its determination to really carry out the Open Letter of this conference. (*Applause*) I think we have got quite a few units that are ready to work like that. This is the guarantee, and especially if we give them a little bit of leadership, if we begin to mobilize them from the bottom for this turn, then we will have a real guarantee that we will make the turn. And that is the reason for the Open Letter. It is to build a fire under all of our leading committees so that they can't sit comfortably on their chairs.

This Open Letter is open mass criticism and open mass criticism is a powerful force that can change even the most stubborn habits and can even break down the worst sectarianism and bureaucratism. We have had a certain loosening up of the forces of the Party right here at this conference. We have had a little freer and more healthy development of self-criticism than we have had before, and that is also a guarantee for the execution of our decisions. I think that we can characterize most of the speeches in this conference as a step forward in the development of self-criticism. Of course, we have to distinguish between the self-criticism and the methods of developing criticism of the more responsible leading comrades and that of the comrades from the lower organizations. We demand much more of the leading comrades in the way of accuracy, care, serious preparation of self-criticism beforehand, than we do of the comrades from the nuclei, from the sections. In this respect, I think we must say that the kind of criticism made of the center, of the Polburo and its work, by, for example, Comrade Johnstone from Pittsburgh, is a very healthy contribution to the work of the Polburo. If we had more of this serious, healthy criticism for the center, I am sure the center would work much better. The center must work under the constant criticism of the entire Party organization. The districts must also work under the pressure of this criticism, and the sections must, because this criticism is the Bolshevik weapon for the steeling of the Party, for the cor-

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rection of all our weaknesses, for securing the real guarantee that decisions will be carried out and not left on paper.

The carrying through of the decisions, however, is a fight. It is a fight for the line of the Party. It is a fight against deviations. However, when we say "fight," let us warn the comrades. There are some comrades who might have an inclination to think, "Well, if it is a fight, it has to be a fight against somebody and if it is a fight against somebody, that means that we have to organize those that are against them. That means that in order to fight for the line of the Open Letter, we must form an 'Open Letter group' within the Party. (Laughter) All the sincere friends of the Open Letter will band themselves together to fight against the enemies of the Open Letter." That is not what we mean, not that kind of fight. There has been a little experience in the international movement with that kind of a fight and experience has proven that this is precisely the way to prevent the carrying out of the Open Letter. This is the surest way to sabotage the turn to the masses. Perhaps we can remember that our French brother Party had a sad experience with the organization within its ranks just a few years ago of a group that called itself "the group to fight against Right Opportunism" in the French Party. And this "group to fight against Right Opportunism" became a very handy instrument in the hands of the French police to disrupt the French Party.

At the same time, comrades, I have heard that around the fringes of this conference, there are a few comrades who are still addicted to political speculation and who are whispering to one another, "Doesn't the paragraph in the Open Letter mean that there are serious struggles going on in the Polburo of our Party?" and beginning to build all sorts of stories out of their own minds about this alignment and that alignment and that our Party leadership is divided into factions. Comrades, I want to assure you that all of these speculations are baseless. There is no such condition in our Party leadership. We have had difficulties in our Party leadership last year. These difficulties were already largely solved and removed even before this Open Letter was written. And when the Open Letter warns the Party against the danger of any revival of factionalism it is not because there are any factional divisions or groupings in the leadership of our Party today. I hope the comrades will take that statement as the truth and will really put a quietus upon all remaining gossip mongers in our Party. (Applause)

TAKING OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERSHIP

What are the concrete measures for taking the Open Letter to the Party? These measures that we propose are: (1) That every Party member shall get a copy of the Open Letter, that we shall establish a guarantee that this will be done by requiring that every

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Party member shall have stamped in his book a certificate that he has received a copy of the letter.

(2) We want every nucleus of the Party, after having discussed the letter, and not just one discussion but two or maybe three discussions, to adopt a resolution on the basis of this letter about its own tasks in light of the Open Letter, containing a plan of work for the next six months. Every section committee, every fraction in a mass organization, every District Committee must do the same. We want to collect as many as possible of all these resolutions as the basis for formulating the resolutions for the coming Party convention. We want to have the resolutions for our next convention not to come out of our heads—our heads are very good and we have a good opinion of them—but we think the resolutions would be much better if they come out of the collective work of preparing all these resolutions from the Party from bottom up.

Further, we propose as the first steps in launching this discussion, that every District Committee will hold enlarged meetings in the next week or two, and following these district committee meetings, every section of the Party will hold a special conference of elected delegates for the purpose of discussing the Open Letter and the tasks of the section. We want to develop such a real popularization of the Open Letter that everybody will be talking about it, not only Party members, but the whole broad group of sympathizers around us. Let the Open Letter be made a means of recruiting broad masses of non-Party workers into the Party. Let there be a certain amount of socialist competition among our units as to which one can most quickly and effectively begin a decisive turn to carry out the Open Letter. Let every unit and member of the Party develop that the first salutation when two Communists meet will be—"What have you done to carry out the Open Letter?"—a constant check-up on one another. Let us talk, work and dream about the Open Letter when we go to sleep. And in the morning when we get up for breakfast, let the members of the Pioneers demand from their mothers—"What are you going to do today to apply the Open Letter?"

Of course, this means concretizing it, not just in general what are you going to do to carry out the Open Letter, but concretely—have you recruited any new members, have you developed the circulation of the *Daily Worker*, have you done anything to strengthen your trade union branch, have you done anything to help penetrate the particular concentration shop, what have you done concretely to carry thru the change of our Party into a real Bolshevik Party?

Comrades, in conclusion, let us point out this, that although our report has emphasized the very precarious nature of the present industrial production increase that is taking place, the nature of the

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inflation stimulus as a part of the "New Deal," and we have emphasized the imminence of a fresh collapse of industry and emphasized the sharpening of the crisis in every respect—let us be very careful not to develop the idea of waiting for collapse to come in order to bring about the change in our Party. If we wait for something outside of ourselves to bring the change in our Party, the change will not take place. There is only one thing that can make this change and that is—you and I and every member of the Party. A conscious determined struggle is the only thing that will put into effect the Open Letter, and that is what we have to secure in the Party today. We must realize the truth pointed out in the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. by Comrade Gussev where he spoke particularly in regards to America of the immediate future holding the prospect of very quick developments and changes in the situation. That is more true today then ever before. The American social contradictions and economic contradictions have reached such a proportion, have such explosive possibilities in them, that tremendous historical events may break out about us at any time. We must prepare our Party for its revolutionary role in the great upheavals coming in the United States. This role which is placed upon us by history will be really performed by us only if we prepare ourselves for these tremendous tasks.

We can prepare ourselves only if we will actually carry through in life this course laid down by the Open Letter before this conference. Comrades, we can take up this task with greater confidence when we see how our brother German Party has met more serious tasks than this, and has overcome a thousand-fold more difficulties than we have, even in the conditions under which they are working in Germany at the present time. If the German Communist Party, with such determination and heroism, succeeds in meeting the conditions of struggle against the Hitler regime, certainly we also will be able to meet the offensive of the Roosevelt "New Deal" and establish our Party as a mass leader in America. Certainly, when we understand that the program of our Party is worked out on the solid foundation of the teachings of Lenin, upon the same foundation which has produced that marvelous revolutionary organization that has brought about the tremendous achievements of the building of a socialist society in the Soviet Union, when we understand that our Party is a part of the same world Party as the Soviet Union Communist Party, then we can feel real confidence in the ability of our Party, in the determination of our Party, to boldly, fearlessly, ruthlessly carry through the line laid down in the Open Letter of this conference.

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The National Industrial Recovery Act—Spear-head of the Roosevelt Program

By HARRY GANNES

I.

THE National Industrial Recovery Act is the spearhead of Roosevelt's program for the attempted solution of the economic crisis in its present stage.

The domination of monopoly capitalism makes it extremely difficult, in the condition of the general crisis of capitalism, to overcome the economic crisis in the way that was usual for capitalism in the period of free competition.

What is the imperialist way out of the crisis, the basis on which the National Industrial Recovery Act was written? It is, first, a shifting of the burdens of the crisis from finance capital, with the help of the state, to the other sections of capitalist society (petty bourgeoisie, poor and middle farmers), the greatest and heaviest burden being placed on the workers; second, a ferocious drive for world markets and the active preparations for war to achieve them; third, the further trustification of the leading industries, driving out competitors, greater centralization of capital, strengthening of monopolies at the expense of other industries; fourth, increasing the state subsidies to finance capital while at the same time the expenses for unemployment relief, veterans' payments and other social expenditures are drastically cut; fifth, fostering of economic nationalism and so-called controlled inflation as a weapon to raise prices and profits, lower *real* wages and penetrate the world markets, as well as to undermine the financial position of imperialist competitors.

The development of the crisis itself favors the advance of the trustification of capitalism, especially in view of the huge state subsidies to the favored trusts.

But this process is combined with an intensification of the crisis through greater competition between the trustified and non-trustified industry, and the greater divergence between prices in monopoly and non-monopoly industry. It proceeds with a sharpening of all of the inner antagonisms of monopoly capitalism.

The NIRA is an attempt to cut through the usual trustification process with its sharpening of relations to other sections of capitalist industry and agriculture leading to a deepening of the crisis, in order

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to achieve an "orderly" trustification involving the whole of American industry with closer state supervision, ostensibly in the interest of the capitalist class as a whole. It is an attempt to create a "super imperialism," to eliminate all of the antagonisms which imperialism breeds, and especially the antagonisms between the exploiters and the exploited.

In the history of the development of American imperialism, it has always been the ironic role of the political Don Quixotes in the camp of the bourgeoisie, who rise into power on a wave of mass discontent against the "trusts" and "big capital," to advance schemes for the reformation of these trusts that in practice work to the best interests of finance capital.

The greatest era of trust building in the United States, in the period when American imperialism after 1898 was carving itself a new empire, proceeded under the "trust busting" slogan of Theodore Roosevelt.

Woodrow Wilson, the poet of "The New Freedom," the futile petty-bourgeois cry against the gigantic, growing monopoly capitalism, became the instigator and diplomat of American participation in the imperialist war that gave Wall Street its position as world imperialist creditor. Professor Wilson, a brain trust all of his own, was the progenitor of the present ideological background of the NIRA. The difference lies in the fact that the present regime of Roosevelt is consciously attempting to mold the course of monopoly capitalism toward the building of gigantic trusts in which the smaller industrialists, will be allowed, if they are good, to eat at the sumptuous table of the masters.

> "In the third decade of the century," writes Professor Tugwell, assistant secretary of agriculture, and one of the theoreticians of the "New Deal," "we are resolved to recognize openly that competition in most of its forms is wasteful and costly; *that larger combinations must in any modern society prevail.*"

But unlike his predecessors, President Roosevelt tells the masses that he will remold this gigantic imperialism closer to the heart's desire, shame it into a realization of its destructive practices, make it, of its own will, disgorge its swollen gains so that the little man, "the forgotten men," will share in its benefits. But the "forgotten men," the great mass of proletarians, must cooperate by refraining from struggle while the new monopolies are fastened on their backs.

A Roosevelt was necessary to imperialism in this period of destructive, corroding crisis to brazenly advance the policy of the big trusts with the garnish of boundless demagogic promises to the other sections of capitalist society who suffer from the crisis.

For this reason Roosevelt cloaks himself with the most dictatorial powers ever granted a president. He slashes every obstacle to monopoly development. Sometimes the advance goes more rapidly

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than many of the leading trusts desire, but as the NIRA is applied in practice, the beautiful speeches about planned capitalist economy, about raising the purchasing power of the masses, about equalizing small and big industry, drop into the background and the actual process of aiding the imperialists in getting out of the crisis stands in the forefront.

II.

Roosevelt's first step on coming into office was to hand the banks over to the control of the leading finance capitalists, and by this major stroke partially alleviating the acute banking crisis at the expense of the small depositors, small business men and the small banks. But the basic economic crisis, which caused the banking crisis, was still in existence. In fact, it had grown worse. So Roosevelt proceeded to more drastic measures in the interest of finance capital. He first entered on a program of inflation, with the benediction of Morgan and Company. The leading imperialists, who at first fought off inflation, later sponsored it when they had a firmer grip on the banking structure of the country so they could more surely benefit from it. Once well on the way to inflation, a whole series of results followed which demanded still more drastic measures from the imperialists and their government. The rise in prices benefited the monopolist section, leading to sharper competition between trustified and non-trustified industry, throwing greater burdens on the toiling population.

But none of these measures was drastic enough to suit the needs of imperialism. Above all there was the necessity of keeping back the struggles of the workers against the burdens of inflation, wage cuts, speed-up and the growing misery of unemployment and starvation. It was necessary above all to proceed to a war footing to propel American capitalism from its crisis. It was at this point that the NIRA was passed.

Here it is necessary to dispel some illusions, as Roosevelt's demagogy breeds illusions as copiously as capitalist crisis breeds unemployment.

We must not forget that Hoover came into power promising to end crises forever, wipe poverty from the forty-eight states (the colonies excluded), put cars in every garage, and build garages for every family, not to mention stuffing pots with chickens.

It is in this light we must analyze Roosevelt's, Johnson's and the brain trust's motives. Because Roosevelt appeals—even threatens—for a rise in purchasing power, lets his spokesmen talk terrifyingly about forcing the unwilling big trusts, and because he couples this with crafty maneuvers for minimum wages and maximum hours, many workers overlook the basis for this action. Capi-

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talism never proceeds to war of any kind (whether it is the class war or a war for colonial plunder) with its slogans written for all to read on its banners. We may even grant that those who sometimes lead are not conscious of their historic role. But that butters no parsnips and it does not budge tottering capitalism from its crises. Roosevelt's cry for increased purchasing power is another "war for democracy" slogan transplanted to the needs of the present class war. It is the necessary shield to hide the brutal attack against the workers. And in the period of inflation the attack actually can go on with the appearance of a rise in money wages while *real* wages are beaten down to the lowest levels in the history of American capitalism.

The objective of the NIRA is the following:

1. Trustification of the entire industry of the country, in an effort to overcome the contradiction between trustified and non-trustified industry, in the interest of finance capital which would dominate larger slices of industry. Doing away with any previous hindrances to the unbounded development of monopolies under the support of the state with the encouragement of higher monopoly prices, attempting to limit competition in the interests of the decisive trusts; reducing labor costs nationally and drastically in order to insure to the capitalists the full benefit of inflation in the home and international markets.

2. Mobilization of the economic forces of the country for immediate international economic warfare, for the gigantic contest for world markets, for penetrating into the colonies of the other imperialist powers.

3. Preparation of industry for war. The act conforms to the plans of the War Department, as stated at Senate hearings in 1931, to mobilize industry and labor for war. It borrows from the War Industries Board, and aims to regiment the workers on a war basis. Furthermore, the act provides huge sums for war purposes through the public works section, and stimulates economic warfare to get rid of the surplus created that cannot be disposed of at home, leading to war preparations to gain new markets and colonies.

4. Utilization of the forces of the state to prevent struggles of the workers for higher wages and lower hours, for unemployment insurance and relief. Centralization of the capitalist attack against the workers through demagogic measures, such as setting of a minimum wage, maximum hours, recognition of A. F. of L. and company unions.

5. Drawing in of the reformist leaders to act as the official strikebreakers not for individual industries but for the entire country.

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6. Freezing of wages at a starvation level while inflation continues and the cost of living and taxation of the workers increase.

7. More open and direct fusing of the state with the leading monopolists, giving the state more flexible forms, so that it could function more directly in the attacks against the workers.

The Act itself is divided into two sections called titles. Title I deals with the processes of trustification and the role of the state in connection therewith, providing for the elimination of the anti-trust laws and the formation of trade associations which would be governed by codes. The codes are to contain wage agreements. The greatest flexibility is given to the president to carry out the intent of the Act. Title II deals with "public works," and in practice has been definitely shown to be an addition to the budget for war preparations as well as an attack against the demand for unemployment insurance, by promising jobs and curtailing federal relief. By far the greater amount of the $3,300,000,000 provided by the Act is already being spent and will be spent for war purposes. Over $500,000,000 or nearly one sixth of the total amount in the space of one month was alloted or earmarked directly to the army, navy and air forces for war materials. Considering the declaration of Walter Runciman, Secretary of the British Board of Trade, that 100,000,000 pounds sterling (now around $400,000,000) spent for public works in England employed only 4,000 workers we can entirely dismiss the Roosevelt "public works" program as any serious effort to provide employment.

Favoring the biggest corporations which can take the best advantage of the codes—higher prices, stagger plans, manipulation of wages of a large number of workers through minimum scales, so that total payrolls are lower than before, though this is more difficult for small plants—the NIRA will stimulate rationalization, leading to a decreased number of workers for a given amount of production.

The decrease in hours, in order to give the appearance of re-employment without extra cost to the bosses, will stimulate the productivity of labor through speed-up and greater use of labor saving machinery. The result of this is an intensification of the basic cause of the crisis, overproduction and a decrease in purchasing power. From March to June, according to the Federal Reserve Board, there was an increase in production of fifty per cent with an increase in employment of only 7.8 per cent. By July, according to the A. F. of L., the increase in employment amounted to .07 per cent. In the same period, department store sales and sales of groceries in the A. and P. stores declined below 1932.

At the same time the greater amount of production actually

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went to swell existing stocks. We will here give only one example, that of steel production, 50 per cent of which, according to the *New York Evening Post*, did not enter into consumption but remained in stock.

The Act increases competition between the different trusts. For example, the first code that was put into effect in the cotton textile industry intensified the competition between the cotton producers and the rayon, silk and wool producers. It was very soon after the introduction of the cotton code that Roosevelt switched his tactics from introducing individual codes to advocating a blanket code because each code in itself intensified the conflicts, not only within an industry, but especially between the dominant trusts of different industries. Many of the capitalist economists admit this greater and more dangerous competition arises from the manipulations of the NIRA. Benjamin M. Anderson, Jr., formerly economist for the Federal Reserve System under Hoover, foresaw this. He says:

> "There will be conflicts among the different trades, steel wanting higher prices, the railroads wanting lower steel rail prices. There will be conflicts between labor and capital. . . .
>
> "I am particularly apprehensive regarding the proposal to allow trade associations on a great scale to get together, with the Sherman Law waived, to raise prices and limit output, euphemistically called 'adjusting supply to demand.' If one industry alone does this, it could easily mean less men at work. But if all of them do it, they will simply strangle one another. . . .
>
> *"Here there would not be one central plan, but merely a central validation of a multitude of conflicting special plans."* (Emphasis Anderson's)

That greater and more ferocious competition, on a more destructive scale than heretofore, will grow out of the application of the act is admitted by the financial editor of the *New York Herald-Tribune*, who on July 15, 1933, wrote:

> "Analysis of that portion of the act dealing with competition leads many students to the conclusion that intra-industry competition is to be supplemented by inter-industry competition of possible greater intensity. The elaboration of separate codes of conduct for the productive units of the cotton goods, woolen goods, silk and artificial silk industries will not, it is clear, prevent these industries from competing with each other, and in an intensified fashion, for the reason that within an industry aggressive competition will no longer be possible and competition gains can only be made at the expense of some other industry. . . .
>
> "Inter-industry competition can take place under the act not only among industries in related lines, but among industries in separate lines. This is because the element of price in one industry is an element of cost in another."

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Through the Act the basic antagonism of capitalist society, the conflict between the workers and the exploiters, is intensified.

Through the NIRA the state is drawn closer to the financial oligarchy. With their various agents on the industrial recovery administration, each of the large corporations attempts to gain advantages at the expense of others, leading to greater conflicts because the most powerful will gain advantages over their competitors.

The codes which fixed the rules of competition and provided for increase in prices give greater knowledge to the strongest corporations of the conditions of their competitors, increasing the advantage and sharpening the struggle for the narrower markets to the point of driving the smaller industries to bankruptcy.

It did not take long for the Roosevelt program to reveal its sharpening of the contradictions of capitalism. Roosevelt and Johnson both could not overlook the glaring overproduction with an actual decline in the purchasing power of the masses.

But more expressive of this was the stock market crash in the latter part of July which was exceeded only by the crash in 1929, acting as the indicator to the sharp crisis that followed. Some of the capitalists' financial writers recognized that the stock market crash was a symptom of the deepening of the general crisis due to the hightened contradictions caused by Roosevelt's methods of trying to save capitalism.

For instance, Robey, financial editor of the *New York Evening Post*, said the following about the stock market crash:

> ". . . The collapse of prices this week has brought into serious question the fundamental tenets of the economic philosophy upon which the whole recovery program of the Administration is based. . . .
>
> "If in spite of the evidence of this week, he (Roosevelt) still has faith in these old tenets he must strengthen his machinery in order to prevent—or attempt to prevent—a recurrence of such breaks, for public confidence cannot be maintained in the face of virtual panic conditions in the organized exchanges of New York and Chicago."

Nothing is more hypocritical than Roosevelt's blather about raising the purchasing power of the masses under the NIRA. The quickest way of raising mass purchasing power would be by the introduction of unemployment insurance, providing the 17,000,000 unemployed, a virtual non-consuming mass, with the means of regular purchase. But this idea is as repugnant to Roosevelt as it is to all the bosses, because it is not the function of capitalist society to provide purchasing power. Capitalist society comes to "a standstill at a point determined by the production and realization of profit, not by the satisfaction of social needs." (*Marx*)

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When the bosses pay wages they are not supplying purchasing power, but are primarily themselves purchasers of the cheapest and most plentiful commodity on the market—labor power. They purchase this commodity for the production of surplus value, profit. The very codes inspired by Roosevelt in the basic industries (steel, coal, auto) provide for the open shop—the free and untrameled right of the bosses to buy their labor power in the cheapest market regardless of minimum wage scales.

The action of the codes themselves (as already shown in the disparity between production and employment) will tend to decrease the proportion of labor power necessary to set in motion greater and greater quantities of capital—reducing the amount of wages paid in relation to the capital employed, leading to a greater disproportion between production and consumption. It will lead to an aggravation of the basic causes of capitalist economic crises.

As Marx pointed out in *Capital*:

> "The conditions of direct exploitation and those of the realization of the surplus value are not identical. They are separated logically as well as by time and space. The first are only limited by the productive power of society. The last by the proportional relations of the various lines of production and by the consuming power of society. This last-named power is not determined either by the absolute productive power or by the absolute consuming power, but by the consuming power based on antagonistic conditions of distribution, which reduces the consumption of the great mass of the population to a variable minimum within more or less narrow limits. The consuming power is further more restricted by the tendency to accumulate, the greed for an expansion of capital and a production of surplus-value on an enlarged scale."*

III.

For the purposes of the day-to-day struggles and the greatest mobilization of the workers against the Act, the question of the wage codes holds first place.

The purpose of the labor sections of the code is to unify the plan of attack against the workers. They raise the strike-breaking policy of the A. F. of L., skillfully carried out throughout the crisis, to a higher stage by drawing the A.F. of L. leadership into the state apparatus, giving them the opportunity with the help of the government to maneuver more freely with the bosses on the ground of a labor-industry-government cooperation to achieve the "New Deal." So far as wages and hours are concerned, the NIRA proposes to keep wages to a low level so that Roosevelt can retain a free hand for his inflation program. The maximum hours and minimum pay are in full accord with the stagger plan of the big

* Marx—*Capital*, Vol. III, page 286.

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trusts and the wage levels achieved by the policy of incessant pay-cuts for the duration of the crisis. Even though in some instances the code wages may be higher and the hours lower than in individual plants before the application of the code, for industry as a whole they are suitable to the policy of inflation and further trustification. The national level of wages is actually lowered.

Under the codes the regimentation of industries and the workers for war is clearly set out.

The labor section of the codes gives the bosses the initiative for drawing up new wages scales—a step that is being made necessary by the growing struggles for higher wages in the face of inflation—and these codes, when adopted, become recognized by law so that strikes against them become strikes not only against the individual bosses, but against the exploiters in a whole industry who are party to the code, as well as strikes against the state which looms ominously behind the codes. In such strikes, the A. F. of L. will act as the official strike-breaking strategist for the state in the camp of labor. .

It did not take Gen. Johnson long to dispel any misunderstandings about the right of the workers to participate in drawing up wage codes, or about the meaning of the collective bargaining phrase in the act. Only the bosses can participate in wage code writing (though face-saving hearings are arranged later); collective bargaining comes into play when the workers do not want to accept a slave code, and the government, under the cloak of collective bargaining, steps in to make the workers see the error of their ways.

Nor did it take more than the adoption of one code to bring out discussion on the side of the exploiters on what would be the role of the state if the workers should see the real intent of the codes.

We have these interesting comments on the question from David Lawrence, Washington correspondent of the *New York Sun* (July 19, 1933):

> "It's all very well for the unions to bargain and bargain for higher wages, but under the code system the industrial recovery administration has the final say as to what labor costs shall be. . . .
>
> "It can also authorize the employment of any kind of labor to supplant the labor that strikes or refuses to accept the government dictation. There are even some who think labor unions could be licensed in a given area or industry and that unlicensed labor unions could be outlawed. . . .
>
> "Unquestionably a system of arbitration will be evolved with a machinery of conciliation in labor disputes and the final authority will be the Federal Government. . . .
>
> "Employers affected by these outbreaks already are appealing to the Government for help. . . .

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"The Industrial Recovery Administration is a new force for labor to reckon with. . . ."

IV.

The act recognizes, in theory, the right of unionization of the workers, and counterposes this with the right of the bosses to form company unions, but in practice puts the emphasis on company unions if the bosses find that the A. F. of L. cannot serve the same purpose—not because of the failure of the leaders to submit, but because of the discontent, activity, ferment, and struggle of the rank and file.

It is by no means the purpose of the Roosevelt regime to disturb the fundamental position of company unionism and the A. F. of L. The A. F. of L. and the Socialists see a great era of organization of the labor unions unfolding from the act. Any careful examination of the main purposes of the act will show that organization of trade unions, or fostering their development is quite contrary to the intent of the act, is opposed to the fundamental principle of the needs of trustified, monopoly capitalism and is specifically fought by the administrators of the act.

The act, providing for minimum wages and maximum hours, as well as other conditions of labor, seeks to render entirely superfluous any organization of the workers themselves, leaving the regulation of disputes to "collective bargaining," with the force of the capitalist state standing behind the bosses and the labor advisory board to be the accepted counselors for the workers.

All struggle against the approved wage and hour standards (to which the A.F. of L. is pledged officially in advance), all the normal functions of trade unions in protecting the rights of the workers, become violations of the codes and the law, making the workers immediately subject to the oppressive actions specified by the NIRA. It is true that in nursing the NIRA into a vigorous life the oppressive measures will be used cautiously. But their strength will grow with the application of the act.

Under the act, the greatest attacks will be made against the independent activities of the workers, the development of revolutionary trade unions—and especially the act and its application will do everything to preserve the company rule over the workers in the basic industries—steel, coal, automobile.

Every code of the big trusts mechanically repeats the provisions of the act about the right of the worker freely to choose the union he will join.

V.

No more apt description of the attitude of the American Socialists towards such capitalist maneuvers as the NIRA has been written than the following from the Twelfth Plenum resolution, char-

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acterizing the role of the Socialists in the attempts of imperialism to solve its crisis at the expense of the toiling masses.

> "To the extent that the economic policy of monopolist capital is adapted to the special conditions and difficulties of the economic crisis, *social-democracy adapts its ideology* to the requirements of the crisis policy of the financial oligarchy. The social-democratic leaders are again unearthing their threadbare slogans of the nationalization of certain branches of industry. . . ."

Applied to the Socialists' response to the NIRA it fits like a glove. The Socialist, Norman Thomas, acclaimed it as nothing short of a revolution, only the breadth of a fine hair from state capitalism—the capitalist state ownership of all the means of production. He declared it offered a feather bed for an easy jump into Socialism, to say nothing about the fact that it may solve the present crisis, though (stubborn believer that he is in the final inability of capitalism to transform its own self into Socialism, he insists on the aid of the Socialist Party) it will probably not do away with economic crises forever.

The Socialists, adapting their ideology to the needs of the NIRA, declared it offers golden opportunities to the workers. But the ideology of Socialism would serve capitalism ill if it stopped there. The gold in the NIRA must not be unalloyed. It contains dross—dangers for the workers. They must use the valuable opportunity that Mr. Roosevelt gives to them to unionize under Socialist leadership, and, where it can be arranged satisfactorily, under joint Socialist and A. F. of L. leadership.

VI.

The Socialists especially chime in with Roosevelt's attempt to palm his regime off as a new shuffle in capitalist statecraft, a separation of the finance oligarchy from its lifebelt—the state apparatus—a loosening of the main artery that ties Washington to Wall Street. *Roosevelt* is going to control *industry* and *finance*, not the reverse, they say. Roosevelt, with all his limitations, will show how it is possible to use the capitalist state for Socialist ends. Roosevelt will begin the process. Norman Thomas (or his successor, if the good lord does not spare him) will complete it. Meanwhile, the workers should forget revolution and the bitter necessities of the sharpest class battles of today.

The Socialists try to give the workers an inverted and perverted picture of what is happening, a sort of Alice-in-Wonderland view through a looking glass where things are topsy-turvy.

In reality it is not that Roosevelt is getting greater control over industry, but through the NIRA the financial oligarchy will get

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greater control over the state apparatus than they ever had under the Hoover regime. The thousand bonds they say Roosevelt is forging for industry will not be a rope by which *he* or his professors will lead industry, but they will be the intricate threads that will strengthen the power of finance capital over the Roosevelt regime and in the capitalist state apparatus. Each day sees new additions to the Roosevelt ruling family that increase the power of the financial oligarchy. As Roosevelt proceeds on the road to his policy of greater drives for world markets, colonies, financial and currency battles, his professorial lyricists will not even provide the words or the song. Roosevelt is not wasting time. He has already taken over Wilson's main link with the House of Morgan—Bernard Baruch.

To quote once more the Twelfth Plenum:

> "In those places where so-called state interference does exist, state subsidies and other government measures are employed, not for the purpose of establishing state control over private monopolies, but for the purpose of establishing direct control over the state."

VII.

Is there unification of capitalist interests under the NIRA? Certainly there is not. The crisis itself, which deepens the fissures in capitalist society, sharpens the antagonisms of the gigantic trusts in their struggle against one another, the struggles against non-trustified industry, the battle of the big banks against the smaller ones, the struggle against town and country. The NIRA not only does not smooth them over, but on the contrary, raises them to a higher level and a greater pitch. But he who sees only these antagonisms misses the fundamental problems of imperialism and its attempts to solve the crisis in an imperialist manner. Let us investigate the question of the antagonism under the NIRA in relation to the unity of the fundamental purposes of imperialism in the present crisis.

The main object of the Roosevelt regime is to gain markets at all costs in order to set in motion the swollen but decaying productive machinery of American capitalism. To achieve this aim, the first step has been inflation, opening the vista, internationally, of a further undermining of the stabilization of world capitalism and particularly of its currency and credit structure. The struggle for world markets hastens inflation and inflation intensifies the drive for markets, but to an extent where war preparations go hand in hand with every new thrust for markets. Nationally, inflation is a big sword thrust which slashes the standard of living of the workers, a standard of living already battered down by four years of

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crisis, by an avalanche of wage cuts, and by the heavy anchor-weight of 17,000,000 unemployed. But inflation carries in its womb the kicking embryo of a rising counter-struggle of the proletariat. Before the passage of the NIRA a series of strike struggles had already broken out like an insipient rash. And Roosevelt had just begun his inflationary program. It was necessary here to prepare a major stroke. This was crystalized in the NIRA.

Certain sections of the imperialists, such as steel, coal, automobile and railroads, can by themselves with the usual help of the capitalist state carry through the attack against the workers and gain the benefits of inflation and the carrying through of the imperialist way out of the crisis better than by confining themselves to the general program envisaged by Roosevelt.

This explains the slowness in the preparation of the steel and auto codes, the threats of Donald Richberg and General Johnson, the Roosevelt proposal for a blanket code. It explains particularly the heated conferences between Roosevelt and M. C. Tayler of the United States Steel Corporation. But as the real purpose of the NIRA becomes clear, as the codes are set down on paper, as the functions of the A.F. of L. leaders and the attacks upon the workers become more concrete, the differences grow less and the mobilization of the imperialists behind the Industrial Recovery Act becomes stronger day by day.

For example, the watchful-waiting attitude of the more sceptical exploiters, who feared the effects of the demagogy of Roosevelt, is now transformed into a warm enthusiasm. Mark Sullivan, political writer for the *New York Herald Tribune*, a close associate of ex-president Hoover and the weathervane of the more recalcitrant bourgeoisie, especially those who cannot swallow the necessity of unbridled inflation, of too much emphasis on planned capitalism, in commenting on the sectional frictions around the industrial recovery act, recently voiced the real sentiments of the leading imperialists towards the act. On July 14th he said:

> "Stories of tension alleged to exist about putting into effect the Industrial Recovery Act reflect zest for the dramatic more than they picture actual fact. It is impossible to find resistance to the act in any important areas of industry, and the attitude of the administrator of the act, Brigadier-General Hugh Johnson, retired, is as far as possible from anything that could be described by the word 'tension'. . . .

This does not obviate the fact that the same writer on June 27th stated:

> "In getting the government mechanism for control of industry under way, frictions have arisen."

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The leading capitalists feel that this drastic measure, precipitating a sharp attack, though it contains dangers for them, is necessary to shift the heavy-wheeled industry from its dead level and when it is spinning they will revert to the old forms of attack. The leading finance-capitalists correctly see Roosevelt's corps of professors as a necessary if somewhat naive group of skilled propagandists to make the Roosevelt program acceptable to the toiling masses and the petty-bourgeoisie. They hope the Industrial Recovery Act will give the initial key to the end of the crisis. Once this is achieved, Roosevelt himself will shed it like the skin of a snake. "The devil ill a monk would be; the devil well, will the devil be."

* * * *

The struggle against the NIRA, because of the fact that it covers every industry, and is applied in a flexible way to suit the needs of the exploiters, cannot be undertaken in a general or propagandistic way. It requires concrete application to the conditions in the specific industries.

It is necessary to undermine the illusions of the workers about the purposes of the NIRA, illusions which are powerful because of the full support of the A.F. of L., and the limited but nevertheless strong support of the Socialists.

We must arouse the workers to the great dangers that face them and their organizations as the act becomes solidified in practice through the acceptance of the codes.

We must struggle especially in the preliminary stages of the preparation of the codes, stimulating the workers to discussion, participation in drawing up of demands, formation of shop committees to demand the right of presenting their demands, organizing for resistance to putting through of the slave codes, and preparing to strike against them.

The greatest concentration of the bosses, as well as the A.F. of L. and the Socialists, will be in the basic industries. It is around the basic industries that the struggles must and will be fought to determine whether the Roosevelt program can be applied without successful resistance of the workers.

On the basis of developing action of the workers against the codes, and all other forms of attacks by initiating and leading the struggles for higher wages, for the right to organize their own organizations, to head off the suppressive government measures against strikes and struggles of the workers once codes are passed, will the Communist Party be able to carry out the tasks of the Open Letter, root itself in the basic industries and forge a mass revolutionary party.

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Some Lessons of Recent Strike Struggles

By J. STACHEL

EXCERPTS from report made at the recent Extraordinary Party Conference

THERE are three important factors which at the present moment must be taken into account in our trade union work. What are they? In the first place, the rising struggle of the workers already expressed in mass strikes. Secondly, the attack of the capitalists with the Roosevelt program and the attendent demagogy of the bourgeoisie and especially of the A.F. of L. and the Socialist Party. Thirdly, the development of the united front.

Why is it that in many cases we do not know of strikes? In many cases the strikes took place and we came in at the last minute or not at all. Because we have not fixed in our minds clearly the present moment. We talk generally about radicalization but not concretely in terms of the strike movement, the willingness of the workers to struggle *in this or that industry or factory*.

Secondly, a failure to bear these three factors in mind makes it impossible for us either to mobilize or lead correctly the struggles of the masses and leads to all sorts of left and right opportunist distortions. We will have occasion later on to speak about the fur struggle here in New York, which light industry has very important lessons for all of us at this moment, and we will see there how an organization is being attacked under the Recovery Bill for a long time, yet even now does not fully grasp the full meaning of this Recovery Act and how to fight against it, but loses itself from time to time in small, routine questions.

I want to deal therefore mainly with these three questions:

First, with regard to the strike movement. It is a fact that in the six months of this year the number of strikes and number of workers involved in them far outpace 1932 or 1931 or even many years before that. This phase of the situation must be mentioned, since it must form the background of our discussion. What are some of the causes of the present rise in the strike wave? I want to mention just a few. First, the deepening of the radicalization of the workers which becomes cumulative after four years of crisis. Secondly, the low level of the wages which has been reached, where in such industries like mining, textile, etc., the total

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earnings of the workers are no more and in some cases less than the relief given the unemployed. Thirdly, the workers taking advantage of a temporary rise in production. Fourthly, the workers beginning to feel the effects of inflation and struggling against it. And fifth, the Roosevelt program.

The Roosevelt program is not a one-sided question from the point of view of results upon the masses. It is obvious, of course, and we will talk about it later, that it is a clear, direct attack upon the masses. But what happens with regard to the Roosevelt program? First of all, of course, I wouldn't say the majority but a substantial number of workers are already growing disillusioned with the Roosevelt promises which were made last summer and fall, and which have not been realized. Many workers begin to understand, that they have to fight to win improvement of conditions.

Secondly, Roosevelt talks higher wages, against sweatshops, and carries on investigations against Morgan & Company, etc. As far as the workers are concerned, they have great illusions, they believe in all that, and precisely because of their illusions they become indignant and are more ready to take up the struggle. Roosevelt says no sweatshops. Good, we fight against them. Roosevelt says high wages. Very good, let's get high wages. The trouble is that we don't understand sufficiently how to utilize that. The Recovery Bill and the Roosevelt program are a double-edged sword which we can utilize for the shattering of the very illusions he is trying to create.

With regard to the character of the strikes. First, we must point out the growing spontaneity; the percentage of spontaneous strikes is much higher than last year. Secondly, the strikes are not limited like in the past to four or so industries—mining, textile, needle and building, which comprised 85 percent of the strikes in the first period of the crisis. The strikes are now scattered to almost all industries in all parts of the country, with the exception of building and steel—building because there is no building and the strikes are mostly against forced labor, and steel which is a special problem because of our weaknesses there.

What is the significance for us? This scattered nature of the strikes, territorially and by industries, is witness to the fact that there is in the making a broad strike movement throughout the country, embracing all industries, because these strikes are taking place under difficult conditions, with the strikebreaking of the reformists, with our very weak participation, with still a mass unemployment, with all the illusions about Roosevelt tending to block the strike movement, yet it is rising. This to us must be an indication of what can be achieved if we properly approach the problem of developing struggles.

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The third point is that Negro workers, youth, women and colonial workers are becoming involved in the strike movement.

With regard to the T.U.U.L. we see a slight improvement in the application of the line of independent leadership, where proportionately to 1932 more strikes are being led by the T.U.U.L. in comparison with the A.F. of L. However, the most important thing is the rise of spontaneous strikes where we have no contact at all, emphasized especially in the South where in the last 45 days there were 53 strikes, recorded by our comrades, which does not include all the strikes, involving thousands of workers. The A. F. of L. came into ten of these strikes; we came into one—all the others, heaven knows what happened to them.

Another important point in the last year especially: the rise of the independent unions who are wresting the strike leadership from us. With regard to the government, already even before the Recovery Bill we noted not only an increase in open brutality and terror, but also an increase in the use of the Labor Department and conciliatory machinery to break strikes, which necessitate on our part the development of not only negative criticism but how to mobilize the masses to defeat these attempts especially strongly developed by the bosses in the textile industry. Just some figures, comrades. Very briefly. In the Auto Workers Union there were some 15,000 to 20,000 workers involved in strikes so far this year. Most of these strikes were lead by our union. None of the strikes were lead by the A.F. of L. There were spontaneous strikes in Toledo and Cleveland. In the mining industry there were some 30,000 to 35,000 miners on strike. The National Miners Union through the united front played a most important role in the Pennsylvania and East Ohio strikes. Although the N.M.U. succeeded through their unions in wresting the leadership from more than a dozen strikes, many of the strikes remained practically independent. In southern Illinois a peculiar situation arose where workers were not mobilized to fight for economic demands but on the contrary, were diverted by the P.M.A. to fight merely for recognition of the P.M.A. as against the U.M.W.A. There our opposition is beginning to move, but still we were not able to play a decisive role in recent strikes. In Kentucky and Tennessee we have no reports of any activity on the part of our forces. In the shoe and leather industry, some 50,000 workers struck in the last six months.

In these strikes we see the rise in the role of the independent unions where we began the work, because we did not have enough perspective to see the rise of the struggles of the masses. We applied the torch which began the strike movement in Boston and

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New England in the shoe industry, but the National Protective Association recruited 40,000 workers and we did not build our union. Fortunately, at least we were able to see what they could do and we did not remain on the outside but got in on the inside and began to build up our opposition. In the textile industry in recent months 40,000 were on strike. We led some scattered strikes in Allentown and Pittsburgh, etc. Most of the Southern strikes were spontaneous and independent. In Salem—I will deal later with this place—the strike was led against the leadership of the U.T.W. and we played an important role there. In Manchester the workers forced the strike in spite of the leaders but we had very little to do with it except a leaflet here and there. In the hosiery mills in Reading and surrounding territory some 10,000 workers were on strike, but we were on the outside. There were strikes in Monroe, in the Buffalo foundry, in the metal industry, strikes in Rhode Island, Patterson, Ohio, and then numerous strikes in the needle trades and the food industry, furniture, agriculture, fisheries, in almost all the industries. At this plenum every district will be able to tell us how it participated in the strikes. There were strikes in all districts. In Boston there were strikes in the textile, shoe and needle industries, and in New York strikes in all of the industries: needle, marine, textile, laundry, tobacco, food, shoe; furniture. In Philadelphia—marine, anthracite, shoe, etc.

In Cleveland there was the automobile strike; in Detroit, auto, steel, paper; Chicago, mining, food, metal, packing (a small strike but important) and so along the line. California—agriculture, fisheries; District 14, New Jersey—textile, etc.; District 17—mining, textile; District 16, textile, furniture, etc. I am going to deal briefly with the following strikes: 1) Auto strike; 2) Mining in western Pennsylvania; 3) St. Louis and Chicago strikes; 4) Steel strike—Monroe; 5) Buffalo foundry strike; 6) Salem textile strike; 7) Fur workers.

It is clear that it will take too much time to develop an analysis of every strike, so we will have to find ways and means of doing it in our press and in special bulletins. Therefore it is better to take up certain problems of the strikes and see how each of these strikes supplied a basis for solving these problems. Salem and the fur workers' strike are special strikes which I will deal with separately toward the end of the analysis.

Let us take point 1—concentration. I believe, comrades, that each of these strikes is an example of concentration activity.

The next point—building rank and file strike committees during the strike and selection of key men in each factory to provide a native inside leadership on whom to base ourselves. How does this apply? Auto strikes—we have two examples. In Hudson

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it was carried through with good results. In the Briggs and Mack plants, where we couldn't carry it through, we saw the negative results. St. Louis and Chicago—examples of rank and file committees with workers from the inside leading, supported, of course, from the outside. In the Buffalo foundry, we had key men with whom we had to deal and base ourselves from the inside. In the mining field, where we had forces to build such committees we were able to strengthen ourselves as a result of the strike. Where we did not correctly build these committees organizationally and politically, what was the result? Many strikes were won, but after they were won, the U.M.W.A. built locals and we have nothing, like in the Republic Mine, which secured the highest remands.

The third point, with regard to *ending strikes*—and this is important. What was one of our main weaknesses in strike leadership? We didn't have the heart to end the strike. We were so happy to have strikes, we didn't want to end them. I want to say that each of these strikes is a good example of when to end strikes. Let us take the auto strike—the Briggs Waterloo plant, on which depended the very development of the strike movement. There we had a problem. The Party solved it correctly. A very small auto strike which took place about two weeks ago in Grand Rapids is very interesting. The comrades developed a new tactic, at least for our strikes, perhaps not for the labor movement throughout the world—where the workers struck and remained inside the factory and forced a compromise with their demands. A one-day strike.

In the needle strike in Chicago, just now, we have an example where if we had followed a policy of not being willing to compromise and end the strike we would have been smashed.

Buffalo foundry—Comrade Johnson already mentioned yesterday how we ended the strike at the appropriate time, precisely because we formulated good demands. In mining our union today has not only learned to formulate appropriate demands, but has begun to convince the miners of the possibility of winning these local strikes and how to end them with gains for the workers.

The fourth point I want to take up is about the demands, which I can only deal with very briefly. Each of these strikes showed that we have learned to place demands more concretely. In the mining field, for example, we had a long discussion at the March 1931 conference in which attempts were made to formulate demands which could only be realized by a general strike; and these people who formulated the demands had no faith in the possibility of winning individual strikes in individual companies, and this was an expression of their resistance to individual strikes. In these strikes, however, the question of demands was correctly raised.

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The fifth point, comrades. These strikes show the possibility for red unions to lead and win strikes—something which our comrades thought was possible only in the needle trades. I know a comrade from one of the concentration unions (I don't want to mention any names just now), who said the reason the comrades in the needle trades can get agreements is because they are Jewish bosses and Jewish workers. (Laughter) I think the bosses are the same all over. It is more difficult to win a strike in mining and steel, that's true. But it can be done. It was done—in automobile. It is true, we did not in these strikes win recognition of the union. In some cases, only recognition of the shop committee, in some cases not even that. But it does prove that we can win strikes.

Sixth point—Chicago and St. Louis are outstanding examples of the mobilization of the rest of the working class to support the strike, to make it a general struggle in the neighborhoods, a popular movement of the masses.

Point seven—bringing forward the Party. Detroit and St. Louis. We cannot say that the St. Louis workers were more developed than the Detroit workers. They were not. In fact the Detroit workers had more experience. The Party is stronger. The union had more experience. Yet what happened? In Detroit the comrades capitulated. With what results? With bad results. We did not build the Party, we could not oust the bosses' agents and the A.F. of L. agents from the strike committees, and this left its imprint and to a large extent caused a weakening of our union. In St. Louis, I believe, there were only 1,400 involved in strike. In the Detroit strikes—14,000. But they recruited more members in St. Louis for the Party than the comrades did in Detroit. Why? Not because of some bad organizational work in Detroit. The comrades are just as good organizers in Detroit as in St. Louis. But because the political line was not correctly placed, in not meeting, as Comrade Browder said yesterday, the "red issue," and in not bringing forward the Party.

Point eight. The significance of these strikes is that all of them led to a certain strengthening of the union. An especially good example is St. Louis, where all strikers were organized into the union. Buffalo is an excellent example. Out of 400 in the plant, 300 are in the union.

Detroit. Well, we recruited some 2,500 in the strike, if I am not mistaken. But we have not been able to keep them. In the mining field, we had a difficult situation. Somehow, our comrades got all tangled up in this question of united front committee and the N.M.U. And we haven't solved it yet. Somehow it is either N.M.U. without the united front or united front without the N.M.U. We have not yet learned how to convince the workers

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of the united front with the N.M.U. as the leader. With what result? I do not know how true it is, but the way the comrade from the Y.C.L. who was present at one of the mine meetings reported to me, the local only now made a special motion that they go on record recruiting every miner into the union. What happened there? The U.M.W.A. recruited 120 there and we have, I believe, some 37 members. We used to say, "This fellow is no good." "That one is no good," and we wonder why we don't get them into the union.

Point nine. The fight against reformism. Here we see our strong and weak points. First of all, in Chicago, where the workers on strike had received low wages and could not pay high dues, many of our comrades thought the A.F. of L. would not bother about these workers, but they were there the next day. We fail to correctly react and to defeat the reformists in the strikes, we underestimate their influence usually and often also overestimate their hold on the masses, especially in the midst of the strikes.

Tenth—with regard to the unemployed. I want to bring out the following: the Buffalo strike in the Buffalo foundry—who led that strike and who organized it? The former members of the Unemployed Council. They made that strike possible and made its leadership correctly possible.

Next, about the Monroe strike. Who led the Monroe strike? We have a Party there, but a very important role, as Comrade Schmies reports, was played by workers who used to work in the Warren steel plant. In the auto strike, of course, we had one weakness that we were not able to defeat; the reformists in the Briggs plant. The reformists succeeded in dividing the employed and unemployed. They made a decision that the unemployed cannot picket with the employed. That was a way of dividing the strike and of driving us out. We did not grasp this so easily.

A very important point, comrades, in connection with the Chicago nut strike is the role of the Negro workers. Not only the fact, as was pointed out yesterday, how to give leadership to all the workers and how it rapidly developed in St. Louis, but how the Party is being built, how these workers are doing more than our experienced old comrades, going out to organize other industries. That is something new for the T.U.U.L., especially in New York.

But another point, comrades: the Chicago and St. Louis Negro workers' strike will have repercussions in the stockyards. We should not underestimate this strike of Negro workers in which we recruited some twenty-five hundred Negro workers into the T.U.U.L. That is the biggest thing we ever did as far as Negro workers are concerned.

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The final point I want to speak about is the work after the strike. One of the things we forget is that the boss is always interested in driving down the living standards of the workers and when you win a strike that is no guarantee that it will stay that way. The moment the workers relax the gain is taken away. We have that experience in many strikes and two weeks later the workers are just as badly off because we did not recognize that after winning the strike we must consolidate what we have and prepare for the next battle. Only in that way can we maintain our gains.

About the Salem strike. What is the importance of this one strike of some 1800 workers, organized one hundred per cent in the U. T. W., the so-called model local of the A. F. of L. all over the country? First, this has become a strike against the Recovery Act. It shows—recovery bill or no recovery bill—the workers will fight for improved conditions. Secondly, it shows that even where the A. F. of L. has its best organization the workers will fight and will follow our leadership if we know how to get to them.

There are many weaknesses which I won't touch upon at this moment, but there is one example of how to carry on a correct policy in such a difficult situation. How did our comrades get into the Salem strike? We had no one there, no Party or T.U.U.L. member. Our organizer, Comrade Burlak, went down there. She found the workers were willing to fight. The workers elected their own committee, did not trust the officials who came out against the strike. The comrade did not come down there denouncing everybody and just say: join our union, something which we did in the past but with no success. The comrade began to talk to individual workers, began to get acquainted with some of the members of the Strike Committee, did not denounce these workers as misleaders but tried to find out who they were. She began to give them concrete advice and won their confidence by showing them how to defeat a plan of the company and the A. F. of L. to drive the workers back to work and to victimize them by making them vote with marked ballots. Our comrade gained a lot of prestige among the workers through helping them with the relief machinery, by giving them concrete assistance to win their economic demands.

Another important thing in this strike, which only lasted for two months, little more than two months. We were able through our policy which we carried through even with great difficulty, with wavering elements who did not trust us completely and among whom we had no organized group, to defeat the attempts of the U.T.W. to break the strike, despite the opposition of the Labor Department and all of the citizen's committees that were set up. The first thing we did was merely to send a letter to the Strike Committee and to the strikers' mass meeting pledging sup-

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port to the strike, and making certain suggestions as worker to worker in solidarity. The Party was brought forward by the Party organizer himself, Comrade Sparks and others going down there, holding street meetings and gathering even smaller groups with one hundred and two hundred workers, speaking to them on the strike. I think, comrades, this strike is a great lesson to us, the militancy of the workers, the confidence in their own Party, the ability to get the workers to follow our class-struggle policy. (Since that time the strikers won their demands and unanimously seceded from the A. F. of L., organizing an independent union.—Ed.)

Just a few words in connection with the fur strike. First of all, what is the one big lesson in the fur situation? The big lesson is that the masses determine everything—provided we have the correct policy. There was against us in this situation not only the fur bosses, not only the A. F. of L. fur unions, but the whole A. F. of L. from Green down, the Socialist Party, Tammany Hall, and the federal government, and yet, with all these odds, they were not able to force the A. F. of L. unions to be recognized by the workers, they were not able to drive the workers out of the shops. And their decisions became scraps of paper. Because it was decided by the workers in the shops and in mass demonstrations.

The Furriers' Union. Here is an example that red unions can and will be dealt with by the bosses and the government. They will be dealt with even in the courts, not because of a clever lawyer, or this or that clever maneuver, but only because the masses are behind us, and only as a minor question do we bring forward such policies as Citizen's Committees, etc. The workers themselves had already decided the question in the shops. I think, comrades, that in spite of some weaknesses of our leadership there, we should recognize the important part played by our leadership who have defeated the bosses and the government, a leadership which is courageous, practical (sometimes too practical), flexible. Without this leadership we could not win this battle, a leadership which is loved and respected by the workers, and that is a lesson for all of us. Now the weakness. The union underestimates the general struggle. The other unions underestimate the fur struggle. Both have the same cause. Narrowness. Proof: the resistance to the July 15th conference, which should have been a burning question for us to mobilize the whole labor movement, make an issue of it in every A.F. of L. union. But it is not being done. Comrades, the fight is not yet over. If we slacken for a moment we will yet be defeated. Now more than ever we must consolidate, and not only in the fur, but in every needle union, because we will not be able to maintain our position in the fur if we do not make progress in the other needle trades unions.

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Building the United Front in Ford-Controlled Dearborn

By MAX SALZMAN

THE experiences which our Party had in the development of a broad mass movement in the Ford-controlled city of Dearborn has great lessons for the whole Party. It is an example of how through proper Bolshevik work we can break through the most vicious terror and involve broad masses in struggle around elementary demands.

At the start of our work, we made an analysis of the situation in the city. We found that the system of cash payment for relief work, established in an effort to ward off the Ford Hunger March, would be discontinued. The city was bankrupt and was at this time considering placing an additional tax in order to raise $100,000 for relief. However, the Ford Motor Company refused to allow this tax to go through and loaned the city the money.

Dearborn is a town of 50,000. Besides Ford, the only other large plant is Graham Paige which employs about 700 men. Close to 10,000 Dearborn workers had worked in the Ford plant. At the present time about 6,000 are unemployed.

Using the bank closings on February 13th as an excuse, the city instituted a commissary store relief system which became particularly obnoxious to the workers because of the small amount and rotten quality of the food and distance they traveled for it.

Before we developed our work openly, we had a special meeting of our Party comrades in Dearborn at which we discussed the situation and where the comrades were convinced of the necessity for the development of a movement to break through the terror. Our first step in this direction was taken in connection with the March 4th demonstration. The Ford Motor Company, fearing a new march on the Ford plant on March 7th, organized through its agents a "good will" parade toward the Ford plant on that day. This movement consisted of a campaign to collect signatures praising Henry Ford, stating that the workers were receiving $5.00 a day—which was not true—and that he had done everything possible for the workers in Dearborn. When our March 4th demonstration became known, the Ford agents organized their parade and mass meeting for the same day in order to counteract our movement.

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Workers were asked to sign the petitions. The collectors stated: "We know what the petition says is not true, but if you sign it you will get a job from Ford."

On February 26th, we held a conference with 20 organizations to prepare the March 4th demonstration. The carrying through of this demonstration was of great political importance not only because it was a part of the nation-wide demonstrations but because its chief function was to combat and defeat the pro-Ford movement. A permit was granted only 10 minutes before the demonstration was to open. Three hundred deputies were sworn in—the police force was mobilized—all with the aim to terrorize the workers in attendance. But the determination of the workers to stick and fight if necessary kept the meeting intact. The meeting took place within City Hall Park for the first time in the history of Dearborn. The political significance of the meeting had repercussions throughout the city. It undermined the basis of the pro-Ford parade and instead of the 7,000 marchers they expected, there were exactly 346 people in their line of march. An essential factor which enabled us to rally still broader masses was that in drawing up the demands we consulted the workers themselves.

We proceeded to broaden out our conference around the main issues, which were: The abolishment of the commissary store; the fight for cash relief; the end of police terror; and the fight for civil rights for the workers.

Here it is necessary to mention that before our present movement began a systematic reign of terror had been conducted against the workers of this city. Even if only two workers stopped on the street, they were soon approached by police or detectives and told to keep on moving. Meetings of organizations not directly controlled by Ford were prevented from taking place. Immigration Department raids were organized at two and three o'clock in the morning. Hundreds of workers were arrested, although later almost all of them were released. And, to climax this, when the workers went to get their pay for the last week that they worked for cash, each of them was questioned and intimidated by immigration officials.

Meanwhile the city instituted what it called the "One Man Grand Jury" investigation, in which every person receiving relief was called before a judge, threatened, terrorized, and if he had anything that could be turned into cash, such as a piano, a ring, an insurance policy, he was ordered to do so immediately and turn the money over to the city on threat of being sent to jail. In these "investigations" almost every worker was asked if he was a member of the Communist Party, the Unemployed Council or the Dearborn Conference of Labor and Fraternal Organizations.

Under these circumstances, we called an open conference to

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which we invited all workers. Meanwhile, delegations had gone to the City Hall to present a program for relief, and had come in conflict with the special state welfare representative who had been given dictatorial powers in the local welfare station. At this broad conference, which was held in a public school (the first workers' meeting held in a public school since the March 7th, 1932 Hunger March) over 400 workers were present. Our program was presented and one of the City Council members, Bovill, was given the floor. He made a speech in which he attempted to excuse the city relief policy, tried to pacify the workers in their protest against the terror of the Immigration officials and attempted to undermine our leadership in the movement by stating, "beware of those agitators who tell you to tear up the city streets, throw bricks and tear down the City Hall."

In our answer to Bovill, we emphasized that what we were concerned with was not listening to more promises but, first, establishing a system of adequate cash relief; second, that this relief had to come from the Ford Motor Company; third, that the terror against the Ford workers had to be stopped; fourth, that the commissary store had to be abolished; fifth, that the state welfare representative had to be removed, and the distribution of relief to be placed in the hands of the unemployed; and sixth, that our movement was not interested in tearing down the City Hall, but on the contrary, was interested in driving out the agents of the Ford Motor Company and replacing them with representatives of the workers.

Immediately following this meeting, we established contacts which served as a base for a broader united front movement than we had developed up to this time. The meeting elected a committee of 25 and made the following decisions: That the committee meet with the welfare representative. If it failed to get satisfaction from him, it was to meet with the City Council, and then go to Lansing, the state capital.

Our Party felt it necessary to support this movement to the state capital, in order to bring the struggles of the workers in Dearborn to the attention of the workers throughout the state, and to utilize this action to shatter the illusions of many workers who felt they would receive better conditions as a result of this action.

The Ford agents made every effort to keep the delegation from going to Lansing. The chairman of our conference was brought before the Grand Jury on Tuesday and an attempt was made to subpoena the writer to the Grand Jury on Wednesday, the day we were to go to Lansing. We avoided service of the subpeona on that day. The next morning the main arteries of the city were filled with motorcycle police who had instructions to head us off. We had expected this and found a way to get through in spite of it.

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In the Attorney General's office we recited a list of cases of the denial of our civil rights, illegal raids, searches and intimidations, and we were demagogically told: "Your complaints are justified. Your rights are being violated. But what can we do about it? Dearborn is controlled by Ford."

When we raised the point that Ford was responsible for relief for the unemployed, we were told that Ford was *morally* responsible. We answered that we would make it our job to make him *actually* responsible for unemployment relief in Dearborn.

We went to the office of the state welfare department and, in an attempt to appease the anger of the delegation, the state officials told us that the actions of the local state welfare representative were wrong. They said that Dearborn had been allowed up to now an average of $36 a month for a family of five. We knew from our own experiences that the average family of five received less than $15 per month. The local state welfare representative had informed us that the maximum a single unemployed worker was allowed was $8 per month. We were informed by the state welfare department that this was untrue and the amount was a local matter to be settled on the basis of local conditions.

On the basis of our information we called two mass meetings on our return, in different sections of the city. Two thousand five hundred workers attended these meetings. Here we gave a report and still further consolidated our position in the fight against Ford.

In the process of this struggle, we forced the city to establish a system of relief for the single men. Three relief kitchens were opened, where over 1,200 single men were fed. The food in these kitchens was objectionable and monotonous. We organized a protest movement among the single men around this and out of the 1,200 receiving relief, 600 met and became directly part of our movement, electing committees in each of the kitchens.

At this time the city began to take additional steps to intimidate the movement. Workers were arrested for distributing leaflets, although there is no law against this in Dearborn, and single men so arrested were refused relief. The schools which had been given to us under the pressure of the masses were withdrawn by order of the Ford-controlled Safety Commission, which is the real power in the city. Workers complaining about food were threatened and in one case a worker was charged with petty larceny because he found a cockroach in his food and carried it out on a spoon.

When the workers' committees went to the City Hall to demand the release of those arrested, they were told that the city was going to make an example and keep them off the welfare list.

By this time the influence of our actions began to spread into the ranks of other organizations. When our conference proposed

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to send a second, but this time a smaller, delegation to Lansing, we were approached by other organizations asking if it would be agreeable to us for them to elect delegates to go along. The result was that instead of having five delegates as originally decided, there were 27, representing eight additional organizations, including the Dearborn local of the Socialist Party and a number of organizations which in the past had been tied up with the Democratic and Republican machines. Our comrade was elected with only one opposing vote as spokesman of the delegation.

Our experiences in Lansing this time were still more important. First, the Governor refused to see the delegation, even though most of them had voted Democratic in the last elections. This refusal created strong resentment when reported to our city, causing a split in the 16th Congressional District Democratic Club. The second question, the violation of our civil rights, was so strongly presented that it compelled the Attorney General to make a statement to the effect that it required immediate action and, if necessary, the removal of the city officials for violation of the state constitution. Needless to say no steps in this direction were taken in the months that have passed since that time.

While all this activity was going on, we were proceeding with preparations for the Ford Hunger March, and a demand for a permit for the march was one of the issues raised by the delegation to Lansing. The whole development of this movement created a very favorable base for the Hunger March and the struggle for the permit became an additional means of rallying new sections of workers. It became so effective, that at a secret meeting of the City Council it was decided to demand of the Safety Commission, another Ford-appointed body, that the permit be granted. But the Ford Motor Company refused the permit and prepared to repeat the murderous attack of March 7th, 1932.

We don't propose to give an analysis of the Ford Hunger March here, except to enumerate a few points. A permit for the march was granted by the Detroit police. Our committee worked out a strategy that was aimed at avoiding a battle under unfavorable circumstances. We had decided that in case a permit in Dearborn was refused again at the last minute, and the forces of the police were too strong for us to break through, we would camp at the Dearborn city line and utilize this situation to rally still further masses of workers. This strategy caught the police unawares and served as a means to build new support for our movement, not only in Dearborn but throughout Detroit and surrounding towns. And when it became apparent at 11 o'clock that night that the police were preparing a surprise attack, and our committee organized an orderly militant retreat, this increased the confidence of the masses in our movement and gave them faith in our leadership.

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The contrast between the situation at this time and the situation at the time of the Hunger March of March 7th, 1932 is:

After the first Hunger March no two workers could gather on the streets of Dearborn. The day after the June 5th, 1933 march, the writer was speaking to 100 workers who gathered around him on the street and two police came up and drove by without even asking questions. It was this new situation that created among the workers a new and determined fighting spirit which also helped to develop and intensify a broader united front movement.

As a result of the broad conference and the other activities, the basis was created for a united front movement in the city elections. An election program has been unanimously adopted and has won the support of additional organizations. Our comrade has been endorsed as the candidate for Mayor.

It is important at this point to mention the role of the Socialist Party in this situation. The Socialist Party during this period made no effort to carry on any open work. Even its Party meetings were held out of the city, in Detroit. But when we began to develop the movement, it was inevitable that we should influence the honest elements in the Socialist Party who demanded and were successful in forcing the Socialist local in Dearborn to participate in the United Front with us, against the decision of the Wayne County Central Committee of the Socialist Party. From this moment on, the leaders of the Socialist Party began systematically to work for a break in the united front. One of them stated that if the united front in Dearborn was successful, it would mean a victory for the Communists and a defeat for the Socialist Party. And because of this the leaders pulled the Socialist Party out of the united front without even a vote of the membership and declared their indorsement of Bovill (the councilman who had defended the city administration controlled by Ford) as candidate for Mayor.

This withdrawal of the Socialist Party from the united front, weakened seriously its prestige, not only among the non-Party workers, but also among the majority of its own members.

While this united front movement which stirs the masses into action is built, it is necessary for us to guard very carefully against making serious blunders. Because the movement is naturally still so brittle, any serious error now would serve as an opening to smash the movement. The Ford Company agents are busy working overtime to do this. They are carrying on house-to-house work telling workers that they will never get jobs if they identify themselves with our movement, and are up to their old political tricks of giving the workers beer and even jobs for two or three weeks in the Ford plant to retard development of the anti-Ford movement.

Here we must say that we have not been sufficiently determined in the building of the Party, although there has been a considerable

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increase in Party members since the movement began. We were successful, however, in bringing forward and developing the Auto Workers Union as the leader of this mass movement. We now have three locals of the union with public headquarters in the city and two women's auxiliaries, resulting in the strengthening of our work, thus creating a broader basis for our fight in the shop.

One outstanding lesson is clear for this movement. In situations such as exist in Dearborn, a one-company-controlled town, where the fiercest terror exists, it was possible for us to break through by establishing first a united front on one issue, then linking this up with other issues that developed until we established an anti-Ford political front in the broad united front for the city election.

The further development of this movement depends on our future activity. Our main task at this moment is the penetration of the Ford plant, utilizing the favorable base created by the movement outside of the shop to build additional groups inside, establishing the Auto Workers Union as the leader of the economic struggles of the workers within the plant.

Secondly, to carefully continue our work around every small issue which arises among the workers in the city.

Thirdly, to be alert to every move of the Ford agents who, under the guise of being anti-Ford, attempt to undermine the mass base of our movement, and capture its leadership.

Fourthly, to prepare the Party and non-Party workers for the steps now being planned by the Ford Company to smash this movement by the unleashing of a vicious and brutal terror; preparations for which have already been made in the Ford financing of the revival of the Ku Klux Klan and the organization of terror gangs to kidnap and beat up, and if necessary murder, leaders of the workers. In this connection the immediate broadening of our defense activities to protect our halls and leaders is necessary.

Fifthly, we must fight against the policy of the Ford Company to move away from Dearborn—a policy based on, firstly, getting away from his responsibility for feeding the unemployed Ford workers, and his fear of the rising revolutionary movement and, secondly, to find new sources of cheap labor power.

Such a movement cannot seriously be developed without a simultaneous development of local leading forces from among the workers, who must be the spokesmen and leaders of the movement.

The further success of our movement depends especially on the extent to which we consciously build the Party, drawing in new elements and developing a local leadership capable of leading the decisive mass battles which stand before us.

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The St. Louis Strike and the Chicago Needle Trades Strike

By BILL GEBERT

THE strikes of the Negro women in St. Louis and Chicago against sweat-shop conditions are assuming a historical role in the new wave of strike struggles. These strikes are of particular importance. It is the first time in recent years that we have strikes of the Negro women, who demonstrated not only militancy and determination, but ability to organize their struggle and defeat the attempts of the American Federation of Labor and Negro reformists to wreck their strikes. At the same time these strikes are the first strikes in the recent period in the Chicago district making the Negro women the vanguard of the strike struggles.

To examine both strikes, to draw the proper lessons, it is necessary to state that the St. Louis strike has its origin back in July 8th and 11th, 1932. Then under the leadership of the Unemployed Council and the Communist Party, the unemployed workers of St. Louis forced the city administration to appropriate $6,800,000 for immediate relief; to grant relief to the demonstrators on the day of the demonstration, and to put back on the relief list 15,000 families who had been cut off. This was one of the outstanding examples of gains achieved as a result of *mass action.* In characterizing this victory we declared:

> "July 8th and 11th will go down in the history of the working class in St. Louis as the beginning of a mass movement of the Negro and white workers,"

and further, that the immediate task confronting the Communist Party of St. Louis was:

> "to consolidate the movement of the unemployed by building block-committees, penetrating local unions of the A. F. of L., *reaching workers in the factories, and uniting with them in a common struggle against wage cuts and unemployment.*"

As a result of the successful struggle of the unemployed, and drawing in new forces from the masses into the Party, profound changes have been made in the leadership of the Party in St. Louis. The whole leadership, consisting of some small businessmen and elements that have no contact with the broad masses, has been

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eliminated and workers who showed their ability to organize and lead mass struggles were elected to the section leadership. It is precisely because of these changes that it was possible to orientate the Party membership and the work of the whole Party toward the shops. This orientation, however, is not yet to the *big shops*.

A Negro Party member, who just a couple of months ago came into the Party, through the Unemployed Council, established contacts with a group of Negro women working in the nut factory and immediately brought the conditions of the workers in the factory to the attention of the Party Section Committee. The section organizer of the Party personally took charge of the preparation for the strike. Already at the first meeting with a few women from the shop the objective was set to work toward the development of a strike for increase in wages, for equal wages for Negro and white women and recognition of the Food Workers Industrial Union, affiliated with the Trade Union Unity League. Committees of the workers, working women, were set up with the objective to spread agitation for a strike from department to department. After approximately six weeks of systematic preparation for a strike, when the initiative group for the strike reached the number of sixty, the women decided to declare a strike.

It is very important to note that the women in the shops were religious and had no experience in the working class movement. When they decided to strike and when the vote for strike was taken, one of the leading Negro women called upon the rest of the women to join in prayer, saying: "Oh Lord, give us strength to win our demands. Boss Funston does not treat us Negro women right. We made the first step, oh Lord, you should make the second step and help us to win the strike."

The Party Committee very correctly proceeded toward organizing the strike. The workers themselves elected the strike committees. The Party comrades impressing the workers that the problem of the strike and the victory of the strike was their own problem, at the same time giving them guidance and leadership on every step before, during and after the strike.

The strike began in one of the factories belonging to the R. E. Funsten Company, the largest nut factory in St. Louis. The weekly wages were from $1.30 to $2.95. In other companies the wages were even below that. During the strike, I saw the envelopes of the girls working in the Central Pecan and Mercantile Company where they were receiving their weekly pay, sometimes as low as 70 cents, $1.14 and $1.26 a week. The white girls in all the shops who were in a small minority were receiving from 30 to 40 percent more than the Negro girls. This was done for a definite

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reason—to prevent the unity of the Negro and white girls. Negro girls were abused by the bosses; conditions in the shops were unsanitary; many of those who were working in the shops, slaving for 54 hours a week, were forced to apply to the Providence Association for additional relief. It was reported by the workers that approximately one-third of the workers in the nut factories were on relief lists. These conditions among the Negro women in St. Louis have existed for years. The Urban League and all other Negro organizations never paid any attention to this miserable indescribable slavery of the Negro women in the city of St. Louis.

When the strike was declared in one shop of the Funsten Company the workers immediately decided to spread the strike to three other shops belonging to the same company. The next day those other shops came out on strike. There were difficulties in convincing some of the white women to come out on strike. However, very few attempted to go back to work. In every shop a strike committee was immediately set up, elected by the strikers themselves and then the General Strike Committee was elected in the same manner. At the meeting of the General Strike Committee, decisions were made to spread the strike to all nut factories in St. Louis; to one shop every day.

The methods by which they proceeded to do so were as follows: A committee of 15 or 20 strikers with their banners and leaflets would appear before the shop at the time when the workers were leaving and agitate and propagate among them to join in the strike, popularizing the demands of the strike which were: 100 per cent increase in wages, recognition of the union, equal wages for the Negro and white girls, sanitary working conditions, and other demands. These demands were formulated by the strikers themselves with our guidance. As usual, they would meet with response from the workers. Meetings would be held some evening with the workers from the new shops, and in the morning, mass pickets before the shop. In practically all the cases where correct preparations were made, the workers responded 100 percent to the strike call. In the course of eight days, twelve shops were on strike, the number of strikers reaching 1,800, of whom 85 percent were Negro women.

The strikers not only developed day to day activities in front of the shops, in the form of mass picketing, which was in many cases a little neighborhood demonstration because the Negro women brought with them their husbands, brothers, their friends and neighbors, and because of the active mobilization of the workers by the Party and Unemployed Council. The strikers also raised the whole

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problem of the strike to a broader plane by involving other workers into active participation in the strike, by visiting trade unions, fraternal organizations and churches for support; by staging parades and demonstrations in front of the City Hall, demanding the withdrawal of the police and the release of the arrested pickets, the stopping of police brutality, etc. In short, the strikers surrounded themselves with thousands of workers, employed and unemployed, Negro and white, who supported them; as a result it was impossible for the city government to defeat the strike.

The attempts of the bosses to raise the "red scare" as a means of splitting the ranks, did not become a problem in this strike, only because the Party was brought forward in the strike. At the first mass meeting of the strikers, the representative of the Party, a comrade who actively participated in the preparations of the strike and in the course of the strike, explained the role of the Communist Party. He was greeted by the strikers and the Communist Party won their complete confidence. It is sufficient to mention one incident to point out to what extent the strikers were ready to defend the Party. A committee of the strikers was elected to meet with the Mayor's committee, which consisted of representatives of the City, some Negro reformists and the boss, where an agreement was to be reached. Mayor Dickman demanded that the union organizer should not be seated at the meeting because he is a Communist. The strikers' committee, however, refused to meet with the Mayor's committee unless the representatives of the union were seated. When the spokesman for the strikers was asked: "Why do you stick to the Communist Party?" her answer was: "The Urban League never sticked with us, nor the Universal Negro Improvement Association nor any other Negro organization or church. The Communist Party is the only one that give us guidance and leadership. That's why we stick by the Communist Party." The union organizer was seated.

In the course of the strike the union was built on the basis of the shop. Shop locals of the Food Workers Industrial Union, affiliated with the T.U.U.L., were established in every shop on strike, embracing practically all strikers. It was necessary to readjust dues in such a manner so that the strikers would be able to pay. Therefore, initiations were reduced to 10c and dues to 10c a week. The Communist Party and the Young Communist League were also built during the strike. At present, there are six shop units of the Party and four shop units of the Young Communist League that have been organized, and the further consolidation of the Party is proceeding. The strikers won all their demands: Increase of wages

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by 100 per cent; equal wages for Negro and white, improvement of the conditions in the shops, and recognition of the shop committees and the union.

The victory of the St. Louis strike is of tremendous importance from the point of view that the strike was organized and led by Negro women. They joined the union and large numbers of Negro and white women strikers joined the Communist Party and Young Communist League. What a change took place among these women who practically without exception were religious, during the eight days of the strike! This Negro woman, who at the first meeting where they decided to strike, prayed to the lord to win the strike, afterward, when the pastor in the church refused to take a collection for the strikers, came back to the strikers and reported that from now on the union is her church and now she is a member of the Communist Party.

Many comrades, isolated from the masses, who are afraid to develop struggles because there would be no leadership, ought to have been on the picket lines and at the meetings of the strikers, heard these Negro women, their speeches, and seen them in action. One would have thought that these Negro women had been for years trained in the working class movement. Every one of them very quickly adjusted herself to the situation and gave leadership. There were no difficulties with the strikers in understanding the full nature of the strike. Best proof of this is that the strikers were not fooled by Mayor Dickman's demagogy, in coming to speak in the Communist Party headquarters, which were the headquarters of the strikers; nor the more skillful of the Negro politicians, Grant, who opened his speech by giving credit "to the Communist friends for bringing to the attention of the city the miserable conditions of his people." None could be shaken from the belief that the Communist Party was their Party, that their protection was the Food Workers Industrial Union.

The Party participated very actively in the strike. But not only that. It broadened the outlook of the strikers. At the mass meetings, we discussed with the strikers the Scottsboro boys' case, the national policy of the Soviet Union, comparing it with Negro oppression in the United States, comparing the Soviet Union with the United States as the country where there is no unemployment, where the workers enjoy conditions, etc., showing the revolutionary way out of the economic crisis of capitalism.

When the strike ended and the workers went back to work, there was no decline in the activities of the union. On the contrary, the

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activities of the union and of its members have been increased. In their respective shops, workers of the shop committees are actively defending their interests and gaining small concessions from the bosses, in addition to the victories obtained in the strike. These nut pickers furthermore decided that their task is to organize the workers in other industries. They decided that every shop should concentrate upon and organize other shops: needle, railroad, etc.

As a result of these activities, strikes took place in two needle trades shops, both resulting in victory. A union has been organized and two shop units of the Party formed and one shop unit of the Y.C.L. At present there is a strike of 300 textile workers in three shops as a result of the organizational work of the nut pickers. One of the nut pickers developed work among the marine workers, others also have established contact with and recruited railroad workers to the Party.

As a result of the victory of the nut pickers' strike, the popular slogan among the workers, employed and unemployed, is: "*Do as the nut pickers did.*" So much so that in many shops workers are discussing the results of the strike, preparing their own strikes, building groups in the shops, organizing unions and building the Party.

The successful strike also had its effect upon the workers who are organized in the American Federation of Labor. At the convention of the Missouri State Federation of Labor, at which the Party had no contact whatsoever, rank and file delegates raised the question of the nut pickers' strike, demanding that the A. F. of L. change its policy of conducting strike struggles and adopt the policy developed by the nut pickers. The bourgeois press was so alarmed by the sympathy shown by the rank and file delegates at the State Convention, that they spoke of a "split" in the A. F. of L.

The St. Louis Party organization, as a result of the strike activities, changed its outlook and realized that the main problem confronting it is penetrating into the big shops of the heavy industries, seeing the strikes in the light industries as the stepping stones to the steel mills, railroads and packing houses, toward which the whole attention of the Party must be directed.

By registering the above, it is necessary to state that further consolidation of the union and the Party in the nut factories in St. Louis is necessary so that the union and the Party can systematically develop struggle for the improvement of the conditions in the shops (wages, hours, etc.), and systematically carry on a campaign against the Negro reformists, the American Federation of Labor, and the left reformists, the Muste types. Under no circumstances must we already feel that all the workers in the nut factories have been won

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ideologically to the extent that no further work is necessary. On the contrary. It is necessary to carry on systematic political work among the workers in the nut factories bringing in all other problems confronting the working class

* * * *

The Sopkins dress shops in Chicago employ approximately 1600 workers, primarily Negro women, who work under similar conditions to those in the nut factories in St. Louis. Here the Section Committee of Section Seven, with the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, undertook the task to penetrate the shops, with the objective to develop immediate strike struggle. Contacts were established with the workers through the Party member working in the shop. Meetings were held, committees set up, the whole preparation was made in a hurry because the season in this industry was reaching its peak and if the strike were delayed, it would be difficult to carry it through. The District Committee together with the Section Committee carefully analyzed the situation and time of the preparation for a strike. Here, too, concentration was made on a strategic shop on 39th and Michigan Avenue. To close down this shop meant crippled production in other shops.

At a mass meeting, at which over 200 were present, the workers of the Sopkins Dress shop unanimously decided to declare a strike, formulate demands, elect a strike committee, draw the union organizer into the committee, etc. The first day the shop was out, only a handful remained on the job. The strike spread immediately to three other shops so that every shop of Sopkins dress was on strike. Mass picketing was developed and also night picketing because of the announcement that Sopkins would recruit workers for a night shift. All the attempts to bring strikebreakers into the shops were defeated by mass picketing. Police were mobilized in large numbers and picket lines were constantly attacked and smashed to the point that around 39th and Michigan no pickets were permitted. But even this terror did not break the ranks of the strikers. Daily meetings of the strikers took place.

However, in the course of the strike, there were some glaring weaknesses. For instance, no shop locals of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union were organized during the course of the strike. A General Strike Committee was elected by the strikers and actually was the leadership of the strike, but in the respective shops no strike committees were set up. This weakened the strike and made difficult daily mobilization of all the strikers, only about one third actively participating in the strike.

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The Party was not brought to the forefront during the strike among the strikers. There was a tendency among some leading comrades not to bring the Party forward in an attempt to avoid the "red scare" issue. This was at a time when the Negro press raised the cry that "Reds declare a strike and actively campaign against white workers participating in the strike" for the purpose of weakening and defeating the strike. The A. F. of L. came to the strike and attempted to divide the workers. The A. F. of L. under police protection came on the picket line, and a couple of A. F. of L. organizers distributed their literature. This antagonized the workers against the A. F. of L. leadership.

The Negro reformists and misleaders, particularly Negro Congressman De Priest, actively attempted to smash the strike. De Priest called a meeting of the strikers. The Strike Committee decided to mobilize all the strikers to attend the meeting with the object of taking the meeting over. The strikers took over the meeting, elected their own chairman and when this was done, by a unanimous decision of the strikers, representatives of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union and the Trade Union Unity League, James Ford, E. B. Girsch, came to the meeting, and were greeted enthusiastically by all the workers. In the face of De Priest, Sopkins and the Negro politicians who were present at this meeting, the strikers rejected the proposals for settlement of the strike offered by De Priest, which provided for the setting up of a committee of "workers, bosses, and citizens to adjust the grievances of the workers in the shops." The workers demanded recognition of their Union and shop committees and refused to have any committee of the bosses.

But De Priest did not end his treacherous role when he was defeated at the meeting of the strikers. On the day when the agreement was to be signed between the representatives of the Union, the strikers and Sopkins, including 17½ per cent increase in wages, recognition of the shop committees elected by the workers in each shop and department, improvement of the working conditions in the shops, etc., Congressman De Priest demanded that Sopkins refuse to sign the agreement which he previously agreed to, which included recognition of the shop committees. De Priest fully understands the meaning of the shop committees and was therefore against it. Sopkins had the support of De Priest and therefore refused to sign the very agreement he had agreed to sign previously. This was a crucial moment in the life of the strike. There were tendencies among some leading comrades to reject the whole agreement and continue to strike. It would have meant the smashing of the strike and defeat, because as yet the strike was not organizationally consoli-

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dated. The union was not well established, the Party did not play a sufficient role in the strike. This leftist approach would have been very disastrous in the strike. It was only under the guidance of the District Committee that the following decisions were reached:

1. We accept the part of the agreement which provides for a 17½ per cent increase in wages, and improvement of conditions.

2. That we reject the part of the agreement that provides for setting up of committee consisting of one worker of the shop and social worker, and in case they don't agree on the problems confronting the workers, they will be turned over for settlement to the representatives of the bourgeois "Citizen's Committee."

3. That we elect in every shop at special meetings of the strikers a shop committee which will take up the grievances of the workers, being backed up by the workers to carry the struggle for the improvement of the conditions of the workers inside the shop.

These proposals were made to the strikers, they were *unanimously* accepted, striker after striker made a speech, characterizing the treacherous role of betrayal of De Priest, stating that they are returning to work not defeated, but with important victories and above all, with organization. Shop meetings in every shop were held, shop committees elected and the union consolidated organizationally. Approximately two-thirds of the strikers joined the union. The correctness of this policy has been proven in life itself. Not only did the workers receive a 17½ per cent wage increase, but in many cases shop committees were able, with the mass support and pressure of the workers, to force the boss to grant more. In many instances the increase represents 30 to 40 per cent. The shop committees, though officially not recognized by the company, are actually a tremendous weapon in the struggle for better conditions.

The strike in Sopkins Dress Co. lasted two weeks. The ending of the strike in due time was a correct step. If the strike had been prolonged, under the conditions that we were faced with, this strike would have been lost for the workers and no organizational consolidation would have been achieved. The outstanding weakness in the Sopkins Dress strike is that the Party and Young Communist League were not built sufficiently. Only a handful of workers were recruited into the Party and Y.C.L. and only one shop nucleus of the Young Communist League has been organized so far. This in spite of the fact that large numbers of Negro women are ready for the Party and 30 filled out application cards.

The Party was not built primarily because many leading comrades active in the strike grossly underestimated the need of building the Party in the course of the struggle. The task confronting the

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Party and the union is to consolidate organizationally in the shops, by building shop locals of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union; by building shop nuclei of the Communist Party and Young Communist League. Further, to utilize this strike to establish contacts with new sections of the workers, to penetrate into every shop and above all into the stock yards.

Further, it is of tremendous importance to concentrate our attack on the betrayal of the Negro masses by Congressman Oscar De Priest, whose role is that of an arch enemy of the Negro people and lackey of the white ruling class. De Priest was behind the killing of three Negro workers on the south side of Chicago in the eviction struggles during the August days of 1931. De Priest is behind the terror that rages against the Negro masses on the south side of Chicago and now he openly robbed the Negro women of their victories in the Sopkins Dress. By concentrating the main attack against De Priest and his associates, we must not overlook that the A. F. of L., who Jim Crows the Negro workers with high dues, prevents workers in the sweat shops and other industries from joining the unions and wherever there are strikes, they come in at the call of the bosses for the purpose of dividing the workers and smashing the struggle. An example of this we have seen in the spontaneous strike of 50 packing house workers at the Oppenheimer Company. These workers struck spontaneously. The Packing House Workers Industrial Union immediately established contact with the strikers and they accepted the leadership of the Union. But the boss brought in the A.F. of L., succeeded in winning over some white workers, resulting in the defeat of the strike.

In every strike struggle, in every preparation for a strike, in addition to the correct application of the policy of strike strategy and of proper organization, it is necessary to concentrate the main strategic attack upon the leaders of the American Federation of Labor and "left" reformists of the Muste type, and in a completely convincing manner, expose their role of betrayal. Without defeating the influence of the leadership of the A. F. of L. and Musteites it is impossible to speak of successful strikes.

The strikes of the Negro women in St. Louis and Chicago helped the Chicago Party district organization in orientating the Party toward the work in the shops and conclusively proved the possibilities of development of strikes. In light of the Open Letter, the task confronting the Chicago Party district is to *penetrate into the big shops, the steel mills, mines, railroads and packing houses, to make these shops a fortress of our movement.*

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The Tasks Among the Foreign-Born Workers

By F. BROWN

Comrades: At this plenum we are not going to submit a special resolution on the work in the language organizations. The resolution will have to be worked out in line with the Open Letter, in line with the discussion at this plenum and a deep analysis of our language work made by all the language buros and the district committees of the Party subsequent to this plenum on the basis of a draft resolution on language work submitted to the Central Committee as material.

The material submitted to us points out in its introduction the following:

> "The split up condition of the American working class into various languages which the bourgeoisie has always skillfully exploited to keep the workers divided, is one of the main sources of the strength of the American bourgeoisie. With the sharpening of the crisis and the radicalization of the workers, the unity of the working class is growing but at the same time the bourgeoisie is increasing its efforts to keep the workers divided and deepen the already existing division. It is of the greatest importance for the Party and revolutionary organizations, in the interests of the unity and solidarity of the working class, that more systematic attention be given to the foreign-born work, side by side with the Negro work, and the penetration into the ranks of the native-born American proletariat. Subtle propaganda against the foreign-born workers is carried on among the native-born workers. Mass deportations are supporting this propaganda and at the same time aiming at the terrorization and intimidation of the foreign-born workers.
>
> "Aside from these methods, the bourgeoisie is also trying to keep the foreign-born workers under the influence of its ideology. Numerous foreign language organizations, still under the leadership and influence of the social-fascist and fascist leaders among the various nationalities, are consistently carrying out these efforts of the American bourgeoisie by maintaining nationalist, religious and other reactionary ideas to prevent these workers from uniting with the American-born workers and to defend their interests. At the same time, the foreign-born workers in the United States are subjected to the most severe exploitation. They are being discriminated against in the distribution of relief, while unemployed. These conditions contribute to their radicalization and bring them to class-consciousness and closer to the struggle of the whole working class.

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> "Because of this, our work in the foreign language sections is of overwhelming importance. This importance is even increased by the fact that in basic industries such as coal, mining and steel, there is a predominance of foreign-born workers."

Is this analysis correct? We have to answer yes. It is the line that the Party has been endeavoring to carry out in its language work to a great extent embodied in the resolution of the Sixteenth Plenum. However, as in other phases of the Party work, also in the language field we must state that there is a discrepancy between our correct analysis and the carrying through of the tasks.

What is the situation of the foreign born masses of workers today? Millions of them are unemployed. Those remaining in the shops have received vicious cuts in wages, even more so than the American workers, with the exception of the Negroes, because of the fact that the largest number of them are unskilled workers. The foreign unemployed workers are discriminated against by the various welfare organizations when it comes to relief, they are discriminated and terrorized in the factories, in thousands they are losing their life savings which they have invested in small homes. The best fighters of them are under constant danger of deportation, are persecuted, arrested and deported by the thousands.

We know that millions of foreign-born workers are organized in all kinds of organizations which are instruments of their own and the American bourgeoisie because of the reactionary leadership of those organizations. The American bourgeoisie in cooperation with the ruling class of the original countries of the foreign-born skillfully carry out a policy of dividing these workers by developing nationalistic and chauvinistic tendencies and at the same time stirring up American patriotism among them. Here we have a revival of the old Maternich policy of divide and rule in the period of the "new deal."

It is very interesting to note that while the best militants among the foreigners are persecuted, driven out from the country, where they have given their sweat and blood for years to the capitalists, the agents of the fascist countries are receiving from the American bourgeoisie all kinds of assistance, are touring the country in the interests of their fascist governments and the American ruling class. Bulgarian fascist agents, Polish fascist agents, Italians are complimented by the American authorities and made heroes in the eyes of the foreign born. Especially in the last few years can be noticed the strenuous effort by the bourgeoisie to prevent the penetration of our influence among the wide masses of foreign born workers. The following will illustrate how this policy is carried out in practice. Archbishop A. Taragoras came to this country

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from Greece for one particular purpose, to reorganize the Greek mass organizations, falling to pieces, making the church a basis of unity for all of them. He certainly did not come here without the knowledge of the American ruling class and its government, without a previous elaborated plan. Balbo's flight has also a significance for the winning over of the Italian masses to fascism and Roosevelt's support.

In spite of the reaction and the terror, we can state today that the radicalization of the foreign born is growing. Together with this grows the Americanization process among them. This process is based on the growing class struggle of the American working class, of which they become more and more conscious of being an integral part. There is no doubt that the influence of the Party through our mass organizations is a big factor in this process. The daily struggle shows more and more foreign born workers participating. Here it is not necessary to quote examples. Also today the capitalist press brings the news of the strike against forced labor in Rochester where thousands of the foreign born workers, the majority of them Italians, are involved.

If we consider that the foreign born in this country, on the basis of government statistics, are 14 million—that 60 percent of the workers in the basic industries are foreign born, then we have to realize more and more the correctness of the analysis that the language work of our Party is still one of the most important tasks before us. The material submitted to us states:

> "Our work in the foreign language sections is of overwhelming importance. This importance is even increased by the fact that in basic industries such as coal, mining and steel, there is a predominance of foreign-born workers."

Looking at the strength of the mass organizations under the influence of our Party in comparison with the big masses still under the influence of the reactionaries, we must say that we are still far from being a predominant factor in the life of this section of the American working class. It is true that in the last period we can register certain achievements. Where we were able to take advantage of the growing dissatisfaction of the masses in many of the mass organizations against the fascist and social-fascist leadership—we became a factor in developing struggles. There we have to register some results. These results must be studied by us in order to be able to utilize them in all our further work in the language field. The anti-fascist movement among the Jewish masses, the movement for social insurance among the Hungarians, the strengthening of the left wing in the Ukrainian opponent organizations, the strengthen-

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ing of the Macedonian anti-fascist League are an example of the smaller foreign born sections. In general, the fact that in the last year we have to register an increase from 15 to 20 thousand members in the mass organizations under our influence, that the language press increased its readers from 10 to 12 thousand, that the mass organizations in the last six months for the first time started to seriously build youth sections that already embrace over three thousand members (American youth), show the big possibility before us if we will improve our activities in this field.

What are the main obstacles in the development of our work? The material submitted to us clearly points this out. It states as follows:

> "Our work in the foreign language mass organizations suffers from a number of serious defects.
>
> "a. A general underestimation of its importance. There is not only no regular check-up on the activities of the Party members in these organizations, but work in these organizations is not considered Party work, and is not accepted as important mass work.
>
> "b. Lack of systematic fraction work. Because of the underestimation of the importance of this work, the organization and the direction of fractions in them are either neglected or slighted.
>
> "c. Non-political approach. Organizations of that character under our leadership are treated not as political bodies, but as unimportant appendices that are of value only from the financial point of view.
>
> "d. Mechanical control. Because of the financial approach to these organizations, Party leadership manifests itself in orders and in manipulations instead of political guidance. Such a method of leadership can destroy, but not build.
>
> "e. Lack of inner democracy. The control method used by the Party, commanding, neglect of convincing, disregarding the nature of mass organizations, is still preventing the proper and rapid development of inner democracy in these organizations. Actions are generally entered upon quite mechanically without any political preparations, without winning the membership, etc."

The comrades of the leading fractions in the mass organizations, the comrades of the language buros of the C.C., the district and section leadership know very well that this analysis is based on the wrong practices of our Party. It is for the purpose of correcting these weaknesses that these are pointed out in order that we shall be able to make the turn in this field of work. The fact that up till now very few districts have real functioning language commissions, the fact that very little effort is made to establish functioning fractions in the mass organizations, to check up on their activities, show the gross underestimation on the part of the Party with regards to this work.

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In the mutual field, the International Workers Order must become instrumental for the penetration of our campaign for unemployment and social insurance among the millions of foreign born, American and Negro workers organized in the mutual aid societies, in establishing a real broad united front on these issues. In this respect the I.W.O. Convention held recently in Chicago has made a start but now it is necessary to develop with all energy such a campaign that shall arouse and reach hundreds of thousands of workers and win them over for the struggle. The experience of the United Front convention, initiated by the Hungarian section of the I.W.O. has to be studied and applied in all the sections and by the I.W.O. as a whole, and by the left wing oppositions in all the mutual aid organizations under reactionary leadership, especially in the Croatian Fraternal Union, in the large Slovenian Mutual Aid Society, in the old Lithuanian Alliance, etc. What were the demands adopted unanimously by the representatives of the various Hungarian organizations at the Chicago Convention among which there were Catholic, Socialist workers and others: (a) struggle for social insurance; (b) government guarantee of the funds of mutual aid societies; (c) Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan for mutual aid societies; (d) release of all deposits of the societies from closed banks. This to apply to members also to enable them to pay their dues; (e) to demand a moratorium on small homeowners, that are members of the society and to endorse the demands of the other small homeowners; (f) the establishment of an unemployed fund to be able to prevent the dropping of members; (g) to organize unemployed committees to demand relief for the members and also financial aid to pay their dues, etc.

The conference also decided to establish a protective federation of the Hungarian Mutual Aid Society. This shows the possibility for the building of a broad loose movement in the form of a federation of mutual aid organizations, built on the program advanced by the I.W.O., which in practice will be a real united front of the broad masses of the mutual aid organizations, as part of the much wider united front that has to be established on this issue—under the leadership of the Unemployed Council and the Red Trade Unions.

Another fundamental problem that has to be tackled seriously is the building of a whole net of workers' clubs, and cultural organizations, which by their character, by their program shall become real workers' centers and schools for developing the class consciousness of the workers and draw them into the daily struggles. This is especially a fundamental problem among the Italian, Polish, German, Spanish speaking workers, Greeks, where we are at the beginning of building a mass movement, at the beginning of also enlarg-

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ing the basis for the language papers of the language groups. It is through the mutual aid organizations led by our forces through the federation of workers' clubs, that we shall be able to penetrate the broad masses of the foreign born workers that still cannot be reached at this time directly by the Party, or the Trade Union Unity League. It is through the building of a powerful movement in the mutual aid field, in organizing workers' clubs, in the building of the left wing oppositions which must develop struggles on the basis of their own program, that we are establishing levers, which if correctly used by our Party, will mobilize around the Party big masses out of which thousands and thousands of the best elements will be drawn into the Party and revolutionary trade unions and will help us also in strengthening the opposition in the A.F. of L. unions.

At this point we have again and again to emphasize the necessity of orientating the mass organizations under our influence towards the workers in the factories. When we consider the composition of the mass organizations under our influence, with the 100,000 members and the more thousands in the left wing oppositions, the 150,000 readers of the language press, then we immediately realize that we have already thousands upon thousands of potential forces inside of hundreds of factories in this country, among the millions of unemployed—forces that have to be utilized, made conscious of their task in the factories, and become a source of strength for the Party and the Trade Union Unity League in its factory work.

Of course, the mass organizations cannot substitute the Party in this work. But under our guidance they must become one of the factors which will help the Party in solving its fundamental tasks, rooting itself among the employed in the factories. We will succeed in solving this problem through a consistent planned work of education and not through a mechanical approach as was the tendency of simply registering the members of these organizations to make them ultimately members of the unions.

I want to point out how it is possible for the Party, for the trade unions to utilize these forces in establishing factory shop committees and shop nuclei. Let us take a steel town, as Youngstown, Ohio, or any other small industrial town. There we see that the national composition of the foreign born workers in the mills, factories, etc., reflects to a great extent the composition of the mass organizations of the foreign workers. In the factory they are united. Their national organizations divided them. On the basis of our experiences we know also the difficulties that we encounter in our concentration work in the factories because of the rationalization, spy system, speed-up system, that prevent the workers from exchanging their views while at work, because of departmentalization, etc. This

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does not mean that these difficulties should prevent us from reaching the workers in the factories, to spread our agitation there, to establish our groups there, by working inside, improving on the basis of the experience our methods of work.

What I want to bring forward at this point is that the Party can find a big help for its concentration in the factories, also approaching the workers in the neighborhood of the factories. And through a correct orientation of the mass organization towards the factories, giving practically to the Party thousands upon thousands of potential connections in the industries. It is the task of the fraction to bring the mass organizations to realize that in connection with their struggle against the discrimination of the foreign born, against deportation, the struggle for relief, with the struggle for unemployment and social insurance, they have to connect also this struggle with the struggle against the stagger system, in general with the struggle against the Roosevelt "New Deal," the Industrial Recovery Act that Comrade Browder correctly points out to be a slavery act, that the members of the mass organizations shall bring this struggle inside the factories.

In line with the Open Letter to the Party, in line with Comrade Browder's report, the language mass organizations under the influence of our fractions will have also to work out their own plan of concentration in the concentration districts. Which means that in these five districts it is imperative to establish functioning language commissions for the coordination of the whole language work, that the district language commissions be in close connection with the language fractions and must work out the plan of concentration. For example, the Lithuanians in Chicago will have to orientate themselves towards the stockyards, for winning over the Lithuanian workers in the stockyards; all language buros of the C.C., all leading fractions in the mass organizations, will have to study the program of how to concentrate in these five districts, by sending organizers, by using the respective language press as one of the major instruments of this work. I mean that the language press has to take up the problems of the foreign born workers in these districts, not only of the mass organizations but of the conditions of the respective communities, of the language groups in the industries, which practically means the building of a whole net of worker-correspondents that will write not only from the mass organizations but more from the shops. If this task is obligatory for all language groups, it is imperative especially for the work among the Polish, Italian and Jugoslavian masses concentrated in the basic industries of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois.

The development of this work will depend a great deal on the

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ability of our comrades in the mass organizations to develop new cadres which has to be done by establishing schools, through bringing into leadership new elements. It is true, in the past, many comrades were taken out from the language field and put into some other Party work, which weakened the Party in the language mass organizations. Our weakness consisted at that time in not having taken all the necessary steps to replace these comrades with new elements. In my opinion in the language mass organizations under the influence of the Party, there is plenty of splendid material to be developed. The I.W.O. Convention in Chicago was in this respect a splendid example of what forces there are in the masses that can be developed. For this reason I am firmly convinced that there will be no harm to the language mass organizations, but on the contrary, a big help if in line with the turn, through the work of our fractions, we will draw in the next period into the Party, thousands of those elements that are ripe for the Party, that are following the Party line. This will not only strengthen the position of our fractions but will give elbow room for the development of new energies in the Party and among the non-Party workers.

It is necessary to bring forward more problems which are vital. As, for example, the mass organizations in relation to the program for the protection of the foreign born, the anti-fascist struggle, the struggle against white chauvinism, the struggle against war, etc. But many of these problems are included in the Open Letter to the Party and in the material submitted to us which will have to be discussed and embodied in the final resolution.

But it is necessary to take up at least one more point, the problem of the youth. In the last three or four months, with little effort, the language mass organizations were able to build youth sections with thousands of members, which proves that this work must be developed and that the language mass organizations can be a splendid instrument for mobilizing at least part of the American youth.

I am confident that if the whole Party will realize the importance of this work and will succeed in establishing the correct relation between the mass organizations and the Party it will strengthen our fraction inside the language mass organizations so that at the next convention we will be able to speak about the experiences that made the mass organizations under our influence levers in the hands of the Party by which we reach broad masses, which will help the Party to root itself in the factories.

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The Open Letter and Tasks of the Y.C.L.

By GIL GREEN

THE Open Letter adopted by the Extraordinary Party Conference and addressed to every Party member has a special significance for the Young Communist League—the organization which at all times acts as the closest co-worker to the Communist Party in the struggle for the majority of the working class. In the light of this letter it is necessary to analyze the situation and tasks of the Young Communist League.

The Open Letter calls sharply to the attention of the whole Party the fact that "in spite of the radicalization of the masses of workers, the Party has not developed into a revolutionary *mass Party* of the proletariat," but remains as yet isolated from the basic American proletariat.

This is many times more true of the Y.C.L. The League, which under normal conditions should be many times the size of the Party, has only 6,000 members as compared to 20,000 in the Party. The Y.C.L. is far more isolated from the decisive masses, being exceptionally weak in the most important industrial districts and having only 25 shop nuclei compared to approximately 135 of the Party. The composition of the League is extremely poor, fully 35 per cent of our membership being composed of students and farming youth, barely 15-20 per cent are working and most of these in small shops, and the balance are unemployed. While the League, as a broader organization than the Party, can include in its ranks a larger percentage of non-proletarian masses, basically it must be composed of proletarian youth, a large percentage of whom are employed in industry.

But the above facts are not something new. Both the Party and League for a long time have known their basic weakness. The Open Letter says: "In many resolutions we already set ourselves the task of developing our Party into a proletarian mass Party. We did this with the greatest thoroughness over a year ago at the Fourteenth Plenum of the Central Committee. But all these resolutions have for the most part remained on paper." The same is true of the decisions of our League Plenum held a year ago.

It is for this reason not enough to reiterate the basic tasks of our League, but to find the reasons for the failure to carry through these tasks since our last Plenum.

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First, the leadership and the League as a whole failed to understand the most important factor from which flows our whole revolutionary perspective; namely, the growing radicalization among the young workers. We drew conclusions that the main process among the youth is that of "disillusionment," of helplessness, of disappointment; instead of seeing that the most important characteristic is the growing activity of the youth, their growing radicalization and movement to the left.

Second, we began to draw certain theoretical justifications for our weaknesses in the shops. We concluded that the role of youth in industry was declining. In the resolution of the Sixteenth Plenum of the Party we stated: "The actual wages paid, therefore, supply no more incentive for the capitalists to prefer young workers to adults." This is 100 per cent wrong.

While it is true that a majority of the youth today are unemployed, still the youth play a very important role in the industrial process. This is shown by the high percentage of youth involved in the present strike wave. Under capitalism there is always incentive to hire young workers, as the level of wages is never so low but that it cannot be reduced a little more by hiring younger workers who are forced to work at a faster pace for less wages.

Is it surprising then, that with the above two conceptions our League failed to see the development of the present strike wave and was thus entirely unprepared when it burst? Both of these only served to cover up the failure of our League to penetrate the basic sections of the youth by placing the responsibility on the objective conditions instead of upon the subjective factor—our Party and League. Such theories are only possible as a result of the fact that "in the Party (and League), particularly among the leading cadres, there is a *deep going lack of political understanding* of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers." (Open Letter.)

We began to look for the transformation of our League into a mass organization not by pursuing the path of organizing and leading the economic struggles, but by finding some "easier" and "shorter" path to the masses of youth. Instead of emphasizing the economic struggle we emphasized educational and cultural activity, without realizing that the basis of all Communist education is the daily struggle. Instead of emphasizing the need for activizing every member of the League in the daily class struggle, we emphasized the need for "less discipline" in the League—the need for demanding less activity from each member.

The result of all the above is that our League actually revised the line of the Y.C.I. as expressed in its letter sent to our League

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more than a year ago and failed to carry out the good decisions made at our own Plenum.

But this is not all. It is necessary to find out why, even in some places where attempts were made to carry out the line, so little results were obtained. This leads us to the point emphasized by the recent Plenum of the Y.C.I., that only by a complete reconstruction of our system and methods of work is it possible to turn our League towards the decisive masses of youth.

At last year's Plenum, we decided on a policy of concentration. Why? Because we realized that our weak League could not penetrate all the masses of youth at the same time. Like every army conducting a serious war, we chose certain strategic points of the enemy for attack—for concentration. We realized that by capturing these strategic points we could move our army forward along the whole front.

But the policy of concentration was not carried through, because:

1. We have not yet learned to stay in one place until something is accomplished. We still run here and there, bowing to the spontaneity of the masses, to the events of everyday life. Let us give an example from the work of our National Committee. At our last Plenum we chose four districts for concentration. This meant to assign our best forces to work for a change in these districts. Two weeks after the Plenum, in discussing the election campaign, we decided to send two leading members of our National Buro on three-month speaking tours across the country. This is how in practice we carried out our own policy of concentration.

2. Because of our narrow approach towards concentration. We looked upon concentration as the property of a few leading forces, and not as a method of work for the entire League. We assigned one or two comrades for work at a large factory, and then believed we were concentrating.

Every unit and individual member must understand and apply the policy of concentration in their daily work. If in Chicago the League is concentrating on the Stockyards, this means that the membership on the South Side must know what is going on, must direct and control this work. Secondly, concentration must not be limited to national or district concentration points. Every section and unit must have its place of concentration, and every member must understand how his own individual work fits into this plan of concentration.

The carrying through of a line of concentration is intimately connected with another question of greatest importance—that of activizing every member of the League around concrete issues of

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struggle. Without this it will be impossible to make a fundamental change in the situation of our League.

The Open Letter says: "The center of gravity of Party work must be shifted to the development of the *lower organizations*, the factory nuclei, local organizations and street nuclei." This certainly is not the case in the League today, because: "A characteristic feature of the work of the American League up until now has been the fact that the leadership in a bureaucratic manner replaces the activity of the lower units and does not organize their work on the basis of the development of broad self-initiative." (Resolution of N.E.C. Plenum.) What is necessary?

1. To establish a broad collective leadership throughout the League. It is impossible to do away with the system of replacing the membership, before we first of all do away with the system of one or two-men leaderships. Today, it is the handful of full-time functionaries that not alone replace the membership, but also the leadership. It is they who try to do all the work with the result that the leadership can be nothing else but bureaucratic, a hindrance to the development of new proletarian forces.

2. It is necessary to institute the broadest inner democracy. The leadership must feel responsible to the membership for its work. Every political campaign, every political conclusion must be brought to the membership. The present situation in which the leadership merely looks upon the membership as technical machines which carry out instructions must be eradicated. There must be regular re-elections of leading bodies. Every member must feel from the first day he enters the League that this is his organization, that he is master. The question of inner democracy is of special importance in the Y.C.L., precisely because it is a youth organization.

3. Through the establishment of broad inner democracy, it is necessary to give every unit a political life of its own. Today, our units live on instructions from above. They do not react to the problems in their own shop or territory. Every unit must have its own concentration point, must know where to reach the most decisive sections of youth. Every unit buro must know its membership. The task of every comrade must be worked out so that it fits into the plan of the unit as a whole. We must know where every comrade works, and must help him in his work there. We must give every member a task out among the youth and must make him feel responsible for carrying it through. In this manner the work of the whole League will not be merely one campaign after another, but will be based on a conscious plan starting with every member and going all the way to the National Committee.

4. It is necessary to establish firm organizational control of

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all of our work, of the carrying through of all decisions. For every decision made someone must be made responsible for carrying it through. It must be understood that a correct line or good decisions if merely left on paper can accomplish nothing. Decisions that are not carried through are only obstacles in our path.

The most important question before the leadership is to struggle for a complete reconstruction of the system and methods of work of our League. The leadership must discuss and solve the daily problems of the units. Only by changing the situation down below can we move our entire League forward.

In line with the directives of the Open Letter the whole League must be orientated to the following immediate tasks:

1. The mobilization of the whole membership for concentration on the most important factories. The activization of every League member who works, in his own factory and trade union. In all industries and especially in the industries and factories of concentration, the organization of a struggle against the industrial codes and in particular against the discrimination of young workers in these codes.

2. The organization and preparation of strike struggles and the penetration of existing strikes whether organized spontaneously or under reformist leadership. Especially the penetration of the strike struggles in the mining industry. Simultaneously with the development of these strike struggles must come the building of the revolutionary trade unions, and youth sections. In every strike special demands must be put forth for the young workers, especially for Negro youth, and organs created for giving organized expression to these demands. As a means of formulating the demands of the youth and preparing strike struggles, special youth conferences are to be organized as soon as possible in mining, textile and needle and later in steel and marine.

3. The League must intensify its work in the reformist unions. Special attention must be paid to forming broad opposition movements among the A. F. of L. apprentices, especially in the printing trades. Work must be started in the reformist unions in mining, textile and shoe, where we must work for the creation of youth oppositions and youth sections under our leadership. Attention must be paid to the youth in the railroad industry.

4. Special care must be taken of every Y.C.L. shop nucleus. The District Buro in every district must be politically responsible to the National Committee for the existence and growth of shop nuclei. Leading comrades must be assigned to work with these nuclei as their most important tasks. District Buros must analyze and discuss the work of individual shop nuclei.

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The decision of the Open Letter that: "Every Party factory nucleus must help to organize a nucleus of the Y.C.L.," must be carried into life. Special discussions must be held in all Party nuclei on the importance of this task, and special forces assigned to conduct work among the youth in the shop. This slogan must however not be interpreted as solely a task of the Party. On the contrary, it is the League leadership which must be responsible for constantly raising this question with the Party, and for assigning League forces to work with Party nuclei. In this work also, the Party and League are to choose concentration shops where in a definite period of time Y.C.L. nuclei are to be established.

5. While the main point of concentration is work at the shop, our League must also intensify the struggle for social insurance which remains the most burning issue before the American working class, unemployed and employed. Of greatest importance is the further struggle against the reforestation camps.

* * * *

The carrying through of the Open Letter by our League necessitates the closest cooperation and guidance from the Party. The Open Letter says:

> "The Party is confronted with the task of drawing the young workers into the class struggle. This demands that an end be made of the underestimation of youth work, and of the necessity of putting up special youth demands. All Party organizations, especially the factory nuclei, as well as fractions in all trade unions and mass organizations, must organize youth sections and give active support to the Young Communist League."

Today the Party comrades do not yet realize that the carrying through of the Open Letter is impossible without making a change in our approach towards the American young workers. The problem of penetrating the basic industries is to a great extent the problem of reaching the American-born workers from whom we are completely isolated today. Today our Party is still a Party of foreign-born workers. The problem of improving our work among the American youth is part of the key problem of rooting ourselves among the basic American masses. If this were understood by our fractions in the mining union, by our comrades in the key concentration districts, a little more attention would be paid to the problem of the young workers.

It is only under the political leadership of the Communist Party that the Y.C.L. can root itself among the decisive sections of the youth and in this way become a force for the transformation of our Party into the Mass Party of the American proletariat.

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From Opportunism to Counter-Revolution

By V. J. JEROME

OFTEN we hear the question asked: Can it be that one-time revolutionaries, former scholars and tacticians of scientific so- of the open onslaught of criticism, the subtle poison of revisionism!

The history of the Second International makes such astonishment quite understandable. Yet does not the posing of the question reflect a certain confusion, an unclarity as to the relationship of revolutionary theory to practice? For back of the questioner's mind is revealed the supposition that theory is an independent province. Related to the case in point this would mean that revolutionary theory is possessed of a self-sufficiency to sustain itself intact in the consciousness of a group or an individual whose practice may over a period of time have been at variance with the principles embodied in that theory.

Clearly, such a conception of revolutionary theory has nothing in common with Marxism. Marxism, the proletarian world-outlook, could not realize itself until the modern working class had advanced with its specific revolutionary class practice upon the historic scene. In that practice the proletarian theory fashioned itself as a mighty weapon penetrated with the principles of the socialist positions in devastating criticism of the capitalist order. In the same way the proletarian world-outlook cannot maintain itself as a revolutionary theory except as it becomes a weapon in the furtherance of the proletarian class practice directed at every new phase in the development of capitalism.

How well this is illustrated by the decline and fall of the international social democracy!

For half a century the bourgeoisie had put forward vain efforts to criticize Marxism out of existence. For half a century its ideologues had experimented against the Marxian teachings with their entire arsenal of "criticism," with silence, suppression, ostracism, belittlement, mockery, "refutation." But when upon the formation of the Second International it became evident that Marxism, and not the Bismarck-favored Lassalleanism or the petty bourgeois Bakouninism, had become the guiding theory of the working class, capitalism realized that the situation called for a new type of criticism. Marxism had shown itself impregnable to attacks from

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without. The attacks now had to come from within. In place of the open onslaught of criticism, the subtle poison of revisionism.

History offered an agent. The new epoch of finance capital had brought into being the labor aristocracy. From the superprofits extracted through the imperialist oppression of the colonial slaves, as well as at the expense of the increasingly impoverished proletariat "at home," the capitalist class of the "mother" country found itself able to spare an additional mite, in the form of better living standards and of certain cultural advantages, for a small, strategically placed section of "its own" working class whose services would no doubt make the investment worth while.

The bribed aristocracy of labor became the mainstay of finance capital in the proletarian midst. Embourgeoised in outlook by the slight preferments it received at the hands of capital, this upper proletarian layer became the principal base for bourgeois ideological operations within the working class. Reinforcing the labor aristocracy in its bourgeois world-outlook came the constant streams of newly proletarianized elements driven down from the petty bourgeoisie by the increasing concentration and centralization of capital, bringing with them a host of non-proletarian prejudices and aspirations. Through the agency of these two working class sections capitalism hoped to color the vision of the proletariat with the bourgeois world-outlook.

By the end of the past century anti-proletarian principles were fast filtering into the leadership of the social democracy. Marx and Engels had all along warned against the bourgeois laborism of England, where, due to an early acquisition by the capitalist class of colonial possessions and a monopoly of the world market, there had arisen as far back as the middle of the century a labor aristocracy which had steered the British working class movement into opportunist channels. It is significant that the Federal Council of the English Section of the First International adopted "a vote of censure upon Marx for having declared that the English labor leaders were bribed." In copious correspondence with each other and with their co-workers Marx and Engels criticized in the sharpest terms the manifestations of opportunism in the leadership of the German Socialist parties, warning that the veering of the party toward the bourgeois intelligentsia would eventually necessitate a split. After the formation of the Second International in 1889, we find Engels struggling against the opportunist tendencies manifested by Hyndman and the Fabians in England; we find him opposing the coalition with the Millerandists in France; we find him struggling against opportunism in the leadership of the German party.

The basic proletarian masses in the parties of the Second International were imbued with a revolutionary mood. But into the

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leadership there had come considerable elements from the petty bourgeoisie who saw in the "peaceful" development of capitalism in the years following 1871 a limitless growth in which the working class could think of no revolutionary program but solely of achieving reforms, mainly through parliamentary gains. The constant growth of capitalism, and hence of the number of proletarians, would, they argued, bring about in time a parliamentary majority for the working class which would peacefully legislate the bourgeoisie out of existence.

The reduction of the revolutionary program to reformism meant, of course, the undermining of the basic principles of Marxism. The prospect of a victory without struggle, through peacefully edging the capitalists out of capitalism, meant a negation of the Marxian teachings on the class struggle and the revolution, meant a rejection of the Marxian doctrine of the destruction of the bourgeois State and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. In philosophy it meant the rejection of revolutionary dialectics and a substitution of Kantian subjectivism and ethics for the materialism and objectivity of scientific socialism. Opportunism, the sacrifice of fundamental principles for momentary gains, meant, if allowed to continue uncorrected, not to struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, but eventually to work for its preservation, its strengthening, in fact, for its fattening on imperialist oppression; meant to enter cabinet ministries and help steer the imperialist ship of state past the perilous shoals of class warfare at home and risings in the colonies; meant voting for war budgets and delivering the workers to the war-lords; meant in the end social fascism.

Pitted against the reformists was the Left Wing, which in the beginning counted Karl Kautsky among its leading figures. A contemporary of Marx and Engels, and their direct disciple, Kautsky was acknowledged as one of the foremost "orthodox" Marxists in the International. The role of Kautsky, however, came quite early to be marked by signs of vacillation and inconsistency, the political expression of which developed into Centrism—the middle-of-the-road position which aided in the eventual capitulation of the social democracy to Bernstein's revised Marxism.

Thus, in 1893 we find him succumbing to the reformist State theory of Vollmar, who had a year before come forward with his thesis of State socialism. In a letter to Franz Mehring, dated July 15, 1893, Kautsky polemizes:

> "We shall have a sharp struggle with militarism, perhaps sooner than we think, a struggle in which parliamentary means will scarcely suffice. But what will be the issue of the struggle? In the final analysis—a parliament. (!—V. J. J.) Only a parliamentary order in a republican form or in the form of a monarchy after the

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English model is according to my view the sole basis on which there can arise the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist society; (!!—V. J. J.) that republic is the only future State to which we should strive."

It is hard to conceive that these were the words of the man who since 1887 had been the editor of the leading "orthodox" Marxian theoretical organ, the *Neue Zeit*. Our amazement grows when we bear in mind that in the very columns of that organ there had appeared, less than two years before, Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Program*, containing the celebrated passage which restates with indisputable finality the Marxian teaching on the proletarian dictatorship:

"Between the capitalist and Communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the former into the latter. To this also corresponds a political transition period, in which the State can be no other than the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*." (Marx' emphasis)

There can be no thought that Kautsky's above-quoted acceptance of the proletarian dictatorship on the sole basis of a parliamentary order constitutes an acceptance of Marx' teaching on the proletarian dictatorship. With Marx, dictatorship can be proletarian *only when it is revolutionary*. The criticism levelled by Marx in the *Critique* is against the very condition postulated by Kautsky as the basis of his proletarian dictatorship. Marx' criticism is directed, in fact, against the "democratic section" of the Gotha Program which demands, "as the foundations of the State guaranteeing freedom," such rights as universal franchise, popular legislation, referenda on questions pertaining to war and peace, universal military training and a people's army, freedom of expression and association, and administration of justice by the people.

These principles are precisely the ones upon which Kautsky would set up his dictatorship of the proletariat. But it is these very principles which Marx exposes as a sham and a mockery to be done away with as a pre-condition for the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. Marx says of the Gotha program:

"Its *political demands* (Marx' italics) comprise nothing beyond the old familiar democratic litany: universal suffrage, direct legislation, the plebiscite, a citizen army, etc. They are merely an echo (Hear, Kautsky!—V. J. J.) of the bourgeois National Party, of the League of Peace and Freedom. They are thereby demands, which, so far as they do not become mere fantasy, have already been *realized*. (Marx' italics.) Only the kind of State in which they are realized lies not within the frontiers of the German Empire, but in Switzerland, the U. S. A., etc. This kind of 'future State' is a contemporary State, though existing outside the 'framework' of the German Empire."

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There was design in Marx' underscoring of the words "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." By it Marx reaffirmed the inseparability of the proletarian dictatorship from the revolutionary overthrow of the entire bourgeois State apparatus—of the entire political superstructure of capitalism. When, therefore, as in his correspondence with Mehring, Kautsky seeks to retain the bourgeois State apparatus as a basis for the dictatorship of the proletariat, he reveals himself quite early in that sinister Jekyll-and-Hyde dualism which was to be his eventual undoing as a Marxist.

Light is shed on the subject by a sarcastic passage in a letter Engels sent to Kautsky from London immediately after Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Program* had appeared in the *Neue Zeit*:

> "It was very gallant of you to assume responsibility, in No. 21 of the 'Neue Zeit', for the publication, but don't forget that I was responsible in the first instance and left you, moreover, very little choice in the matter."

What Engels means by this statement is that in submitting the *Critique* to Kautsky, after it had been withheld from publication for sixteen years, he had served him with an ultimatum: either he publish it in the *Neue Zeit* or it would be given to the Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung*.

It is clear that Kautsky, the avowed custodian of "orthodox" Marxism, the knight who so flourishingly entered the lists hurling challenges at the revisionists, held his shield in defense of the Gotha Program, not of Marx' critique of it.

Kautsky took his first open stand on the platform of Centrism in 1900, at the fifth congress of the Second International which was held at Paris. At this congress reformism brought forward its challenge in the form of Millerandism, the policy of socialist participation in bourgeois governments—the most significant tactical application of revisionism up to that time. This question, together with the struggle against imperialist war, occupied the center of the stage. The drafting of the resolution against the Millerandists, who had the support of the Jauresists, was entrusted to Kautsky, who was still identified with the Left Wing.

Kautsky's resolution was a concession to the Millerandists. It criticized, not the principle of ministerialism, but a tactic. Not against the participation of socialists in bourgeois governments did the resolution declare itself, but against participation, as was Millerand's, without the mandate of the party.

To quote from the resolution:

> "...This dangerous experiment can, however, be of use only then when it is authorized by a solid party organization and when the socialist minister is and remains empowered by his party. . . .

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> "When the socialist minister becomes independent of his party, when he ceases to be empowered by his party, the entry into the cabinet is transformed from a means of strengthening the proletariat into a means of weakening it, from a means of accelerating the conquest of political power into a means of retarding it.
>
> "The congress declares that a socialist must leave a bourgeois cabinet if the organized party declares that the cabinet has shown partiality [sic!] in the economic struggle between capital and labor."

And but a short year before, at the Hanover Convention of the German Party, Kautsky had together with Rosa Luxemburg launched a fierce attack upon Bernstein's revisionism. Luxemburg maintained a consistent Marxian attitude toward ministerialism. What gulfs between the Paris resolution and her revolutionary denunciation of the Millerandists!

While Kautsky was steadily giving way to the pressure of the revisionists, Luxemburg's voice rang out resolutely:

> "In the bourgeois society the social-democracy must in accordance with its essence play the role of an opposition party. As ruler it can come forward only on the ruins of the bourgeois State."

Over the opposition of the consistent Marxists who were led by Jules Guesde, and who had been joined by the Communard Vaillant and his fellow-Blanquists, the Congress by an overwhelming majority adopted the Kautsky resolution. Thus was paved the way for the Briands, the Vanderveldes, the Eberts, the Scheidemanns, the Noskes, the Snowdens, the MacDonalds and—the Mussolinis.

* * * *

If a fathoming rod were needed to ascertain the degradation of the social democracy, we have it in the contribution of its leading ideologist, Karl Kautsky, to the recent Marx anniversary commemoration.

In a series of articles written earlier this year expressly for the "socialist" daily, the New York Jewish *Forward*, Kautsky presents the theoretical fundamentals upon which the world social-democracy today rests its positions, and which it calls Marxism. Since these articles were submitted in a sense for American consumption, they take on an especial interest for the revolutionary workers of this country and call for analysis and judgment.

It has become the thing for the theoreticians of the social-democracy to begin their writings on Marx with the motto: Marxism is not a dogma. Invariably this note of warning is sounded by dean and tyro in the opening passages of every piece on Marxism, in the publications of the social-democracy. So Kautsky, the tone-giver of the Second International declares:

> "The Marxist mode of thought admits of no fanaticism, of no congealed opinion. For the Marxist mode of thought reveals

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> to us that there are no absolute truths. That is, there are no eternal facts that are at all times and everywhere true, but each fact is true in a given time and in a given place." [*Forward*, March 19, 1933.]

In itself, this warning against fanaticism and congealed opinions is in perfect keeping with the scientific nature of Marxism and with its revolutionary outlook and method. Dialectic materialism provides a basis for a revolutionary theory of knowledge which militates against every form of dogma, pedantry, or doctrinairism. The supersedence of scientific over Utopian socialism lies precisely in this. Pre-Marxian socialism represented the aspirations of social groups which were unprepared by historical conditions to come forward as that class which should achieve the liberation of society from capitalism. Devastatingly critical though the Utopians were of capitalism, eloquent though they were in their advocacy of a perfect society, their criticism was in the main directed at the social evils of private property rather than at private property itself; their socialistic pleadings were, for all the progressive theories they offered, but sighs heaved and fancies spun. Theirs was a socialism of abstract principles evolved doctrinairewise in the minds of individuals. It was only in the scientific Communism later developed by Marx and Engels upon the basis of the proletarian class practice, that the ideal became the historically necessary, that aspiration became the living movement of a revolutionary class, that dogma became scientific theory—fortifying and enriching itself in interplay with the advancing praxis of the proletariat.

In this sense did Marx write to Ruge far back in 1843:

> "We do not, therefore, come before the world as doctrinaires with a new principle: Here is the truth, here kneel down! We develop for the world new principles from the principles of the world."

But is this the Marxism that Kautsky seeks to guard against dogma? Is it to preserve the scientific and revolutionary essence of the Marxian system that he inveighs against fanaticism and congealment? Is it to be believed that the man who for years has been the leading theoretical spokesman of the Second International, which has long surrendered Marxism on the field of practice, should now come forward to champion it on the field of theory?

We need but look a few paragraphs further to get an inkling of Kautsky's purpose. We quote:

> "Marx' own doctrine, Marxism, is likewise not an aggregate of eternal truths and dicta to which we are called upon to adhere as the faithful adhere to their sacred gospel. Marxism is in reality a certain process, a certain mode of thought and investiga-

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> tion, according to a specific method, according to a system. It is a process, a development of thoughts which Marx and Engels began to evolve and which we Marxists develop further. Such a mode of thought will be called Marxist as long as we follow the method that Marx and Engels discovered, *until there will be discovered another method, which will be finer and more correct than the Marxian mode of thought.*" [Emphasis mine—V.J.J.]

This, then, is the deliverance from dogma which Kautsky brings to Marxism. He speaks of Marxism in development, of the theory of Marx and Engels "which we Marxists develop further." But Marxism in further development means Marxism elaborated, extended, deepened, but essentially, *continued*, on the basis of its established principles. Thus, Leninism is the further development of Marxism. Lenin founded himself on the teachings evolved by Marx and Engels on the basis of the class struggle in the pre-imperialist epoch of capitalism. He deepened and further developed in all of its component parts the revolutionary theory of the proletariat, whose movement had risen to a higher level in the new epoch of finance capital. Leninism is thus not a substitute for Marxism, but is Marxism; in the masterly characterization given by Comrade Stalin, it is the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

Quite different is Kautsky's conception of the further development of Marxism. Kautsky sees Marxism developing and remaining Marxism "until there will be discovered another method, which will be finer and more correct than the Marxian mode of thought." Subtly put, yet the purport is unmistakable. Marxism is given preeminence but—as a working hypothesis. Its further development is admitted, but to a point where discontinuity may set in. A tentative Marxism, in the absence of a theory "finer and more correct"!

It would, of course, be non-Marxian to conceive the laws of motion in nature and society as operating solely on the principle of continuity. It would be taking the position of the mechanistic materialists who, seeing development as a purely quantitative process, tend to reduce all social and natural phenomena to the original atomic or electronic unit. The dialectic materialist theory of knowledge, envisaging motion as a process involving the interpretation of the opposites, quantity and quality; of the transition of one into the other, brings into necessary interconnection the continuous with the discrete, the illimitable with the indivisible. Between the two there is no breach; the continuous and the discontinuous are but two different and contradictory phases determining the transition of the quantitative into the qualitative. It requires, however, the dialectic conception of the universe to perceive the unity in the contraries and the contradictoriness in the unity, to perceive the necessity and the immanence in the interrelationship of the opposites.

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The Marxian theory of knowledge affirms the discontinuous; hence, the relative; hence, the hypothetical. But it affirms these as phasal correlatives of the continuous, the absolute, the established. For Marxism the hypothetical is not the merely speculative. Not science for the promotion of hypotheses is the order of Marxism, but hypotheses for the promotion of science. Not provisional science in the service of permanent doubt, but provisional doubt in the service of permanent science. The hypothesis arising from the established principles of science is not the speculative hypothesis engendered by metaphysics. The hypothesis of Ptolemy is one thing; that of Copernicus is another. As the body of scientific knowledge increases, as its principles offer a broader terra firma for scientific thought to travel upon, the speculative, metaphysical hypothesis gives way more and more to the rational, the dialectic. It was in this sense that in 1885 Engels wrote in his Preface to *Anti-Duhring*:

> "At all events, natural science has by now advanced so far, that it can no longer be sundered from the dialectic integration."

Kautsky's Marxism *pro tempore* is in manifest contradiction to the Marxian theory of knowledge. And without the Marxian theory of knowledge there can be no Marxism. Let Kautsky answer: Whence will spring this "finer and more correct" mode of thought to which Marxism may some day be asked to bow? Unless Kautsky wishes to plead metaphysical idealism, he must own that this beyond-Marxism will not descend to us from high heaven. Clearly, it must have development. And its development must be either from the Marxian position or from the anti-Marxian or from both. If from the first, then the possibility held out by Kautsky of Marxism being displaced has no meaning. If from the second, then the system superior to Marxism can be nothing else than anti-Marxism brought to full fruition. Or, again, if it is to arise from Marxism and anti-Marxism, how shall we understand this except that to assure its continuity Marxism must be adulterated with anti-Marxism?

Perhaps now we shall appreciate to the full the above-quoted letter of Kautsky to Mehring in which he saw the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist society arising on the basis of a parliamentary order "of a monarchy after the English model."

The meaning of Kautsky's objection to "dogma" in Marxism is now clear. It is Kautsky's objection to the steadfastness in Marxism. His cry against rigid Marxism is but a euphemism for his cry against scientific Marxism. By setting the scene for looseness, by preparing the mind for distortion, Kautsky is now ready to usher in the monstrous disfiguration which you may be surprised to hear announced as "Marxism."

[*To be continued in the September issue.*]

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